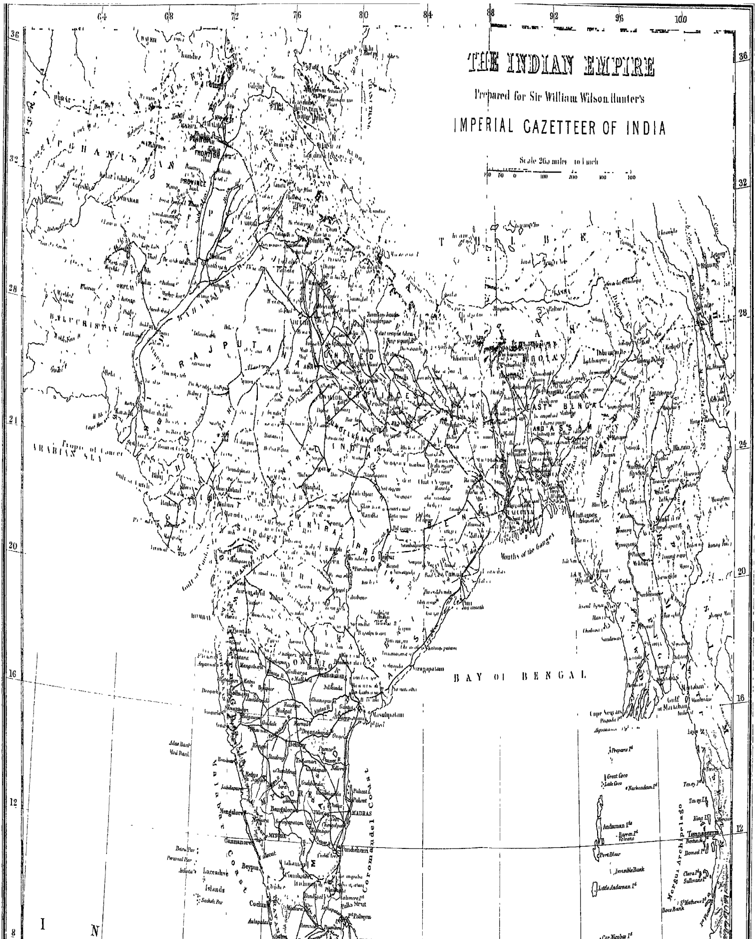
HENRY FROWDE, M.A.
PUBLISHER TO THE UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD
LONDON, EDINBURGH, NEW YORK
TORONTO AND MELBOURNE



Clarendon Press, Oxford

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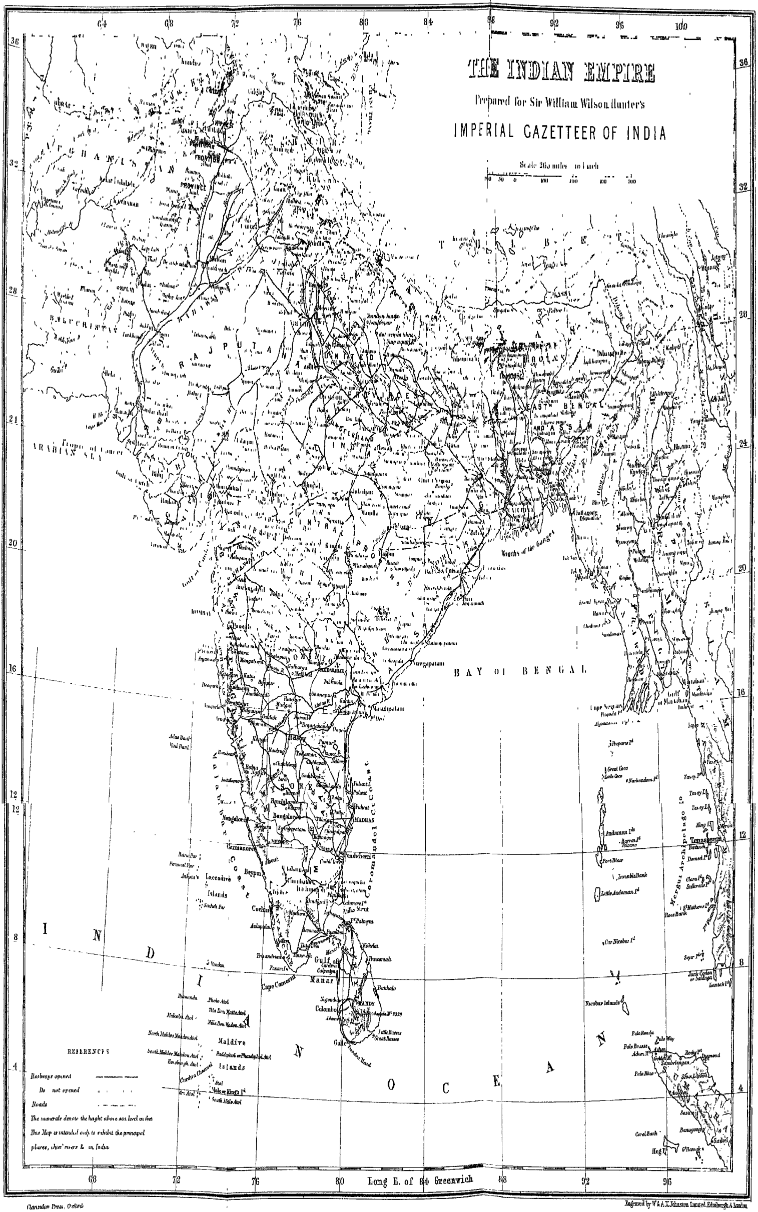

Clarendon Press, Oxford

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EARL CANNING

AND THE TRANSFER OF INDIA FROM THE COMPANY TO THE CROWN

BY

SIR H. S. CUNNINGHAM, K.C.S.I., LL.D.

Tu ne cede malis

OXFORD

AT THE CLARENDON PRESS

MCMXI

PREFACE

I have to acknowledge my obligations, in the preparation of the following sketch, to the late Earl Granville, who was good enough to give me some notes of his recollections of Lord Canning's early life, and to criticise the biographical portion of the work: to Mr. Lewin Bowring, C.S.I., who kindly placed at my disposal the Diary which he kept while he was Private Secretary to Lord Canning: to General Charles Stuart, who allowed me the use of his Journal kept during his term of office as Military Secretary: and to Lady Lawrence for the perusal of an interesting correspondence between Lord Canning and Lord Lawrence. The elaborate history of the Indian Mutiny, begun by Sir John Kaye, and completed by Colonel Malleson, and the latter author's shorter and more recent work on the same subject, are authorities which I have frequently consulted and to which I am largely indebted.

H. S. C.

vicissitudes,—the import of which they were unable, at the time, to comprehend,—the paramount power among the unstable governments and shattered nationalities of Hindustán.

Destiny had driven them—much against their will—to discard their counting-houses and ledgers for an Imperial task. Dupleix's bold conception of employing one set of natives to subjugate another had been employed to good effect. Again and again Indian troops, drilled and led by Englishmen, had triumphed over an Indian foe. One great State after another had succumbed, and— effete, prostrate, moribund—had been converted into component parts of a living organisation. The robber communities—'jackals tearing at the carcase of the Mughal Empire'—had been tamed into order or scared to flight. There had been fierce struggles in which Maráthás or Sikhs had tested the prowess of the Western conquerors to the utmost—dark hours in which it had seemed doubtful whether those Western conquerors were destined to hold their own. But their ascendancy was now complete. Dalhousie's masterful will and firm hand had crushed the last serious effort of the fiercest of the races who had ventured to contest it. The Sikhs, after a crushing defeat at Gujarát, had bent in submission to the fated conqueror, and their Afghán allies had fled cowering through the Kháibar Pass. From the Himálaya to Cape Comorin no power questioned the supremacy of the English Ráj.

On such a theatre it was inevitable that the idiosyn-

crasies of individual character should stamp themselves on particular epochs, and give a special colour to the area of their influence. The progress of the English Empire was, in one sense, continuous; for it was the result of great causes which transcended alike human insight and human will. But its rate varied with the convictions and temperament of the ruler, who, for the time being, embodied the policy of England in the East.

One powerful character after another swayed the growth of Empire this way or that, gave it a momentary check or urged it with new-born impetus on its onward course. One school of rulers emphasised a policy of forbearance, cautious abstention, sympathy with the venerable fatuity of Eastern beliefs and the picturesque ineptitude of Eastern institutions. Another favoured a forward policy, and made no secret of the creed that the regeneration of India was to be found in unfaltering application of Western methods and the prompt and vigorous infusion of Western ideas.

At the close of the eighteenth century the Marquess of Wellesley exhibited the programme of conquest and supremacy in its most imposing light, with bold hand traced the lineaments of a British Ráj which should be paramount in India, and proclaimed England as an Eastern power by sending an Indian army to co-operate in Egypt against an European foe. Hastings gave daring realization to Wellesley's dreams, crushed the Pindárís, and tamed the great Maráthá conspiracy.

In Lord Dalhousie the policy of progress found its most impressive exponent. His powerful intellect saw a new India, fashioned to the last model of modern improvement. He carved it and its institutions unflinchingly to the desired pattern. He pulled down, he built up, he changed the squares of obsolete tradition for the rounds of civilised enlightenment. Nothing was proof against the indefatigable energy of this determined reformer. To trample down open hostility with the red heel of war—to crush factious opposition—to carry beneficent civilisation to scenes of anarchy, oppression, and suffering—to proclaim order, and order's long train of blessings to communities shattered by war, devastated by rapine or convulsed by internecine strife—to give full swing to trade, locomotion, and education, and set human intelligence free for triumphs redounding in advantages to humanity—to develop new industries, discover new resources,—to lop away with firm, unsparing hand such parts of the body politic as were incompatible with a régime of improvement, or refused to lend themselves to its advance—such was Lord Dalhousie's *rôle*, and he played it in a fashion which filled onlookers with the awe due to superhuman efficiency, and his sympathising and applauding countrymen with delight.

Eastward and westward the tide of conquest flowed. Year by year the red line which marked the confines of British rule embraced a wider area and newly-acquired subjects. The conquests of the sword were supplemented by a less hazardous but not less

effectual method of acquisition—the rule definitely enunciated and vigorously enforced, that, on failure of natural heirs, the sovereignty of subordinate States should not descend to an adopted son, but lapse to the paramount authority. By virtue of this policy, various important Principalities passed from traditional and hereditary rulers to become mere items in an ever-increasing Imperial total. The closing hour of Dalhousie's rule had been marked by an annexation which, alike from the prestige of the Sovereign dispossessed, the richness of the annexed territory, and the historical interest attaching to it, had placed the policy of annexation in a striking light, and had obliged every Native Prince to recognise the fact that it was a doom that, sooner or later, was likely to overtake the most dignified and loyal of Native States. Such a conviction could scarcely fail to produce a general sense of uneasiness, and to weigh with the leaders of Indian society, when confronted with the embarrassing alternative of standing by the Government or of aiding the cause of rebellion.

In the zest of triumphant progress, Dalhousie ignored —perhaps he overlooked—certain important considerations—one,—that, however unquestionable may be the abstract advantages of a reform, change in itself is a painful process to the majority of mankind, and no feeling more distasteful than that of a world that is tumbling about one's ears:—another,—that to many individuals and even classes good government, in the English sense of the word, is a very doubtful blessing—

is not, on the whole, a desideratum, and is likely, when opportunity offers, to be resisted: a third—that 'so many overthrown estates, so many votes for troubles'; a fourth,—that the beneficent despot, who assumes the prerogative of deity in exalting the meek and sending the rich empty away, brings upon himself the inconvenient consequence of powerful enemies, and feeble, half-hearted and unsympathising friends, and may not improbably be called to defend his reforms against the combined assault of both classes. He will learn the full hatred of men to those who would fain do them good against their will, in ways they do not understand and by changes in which they disbelieve.

Such a ruler, it is safe to predict, will have some rough times to encounter. He will, not improbably, find his work of benevolent despotism arrested by unexpected outbreaks, and will be obliged to pause in the congenial task of improvement to resist the frantic efforts of communities actuated by unforeseen and incalculable impulses, or of individuals who see in a general convulsion of society the only chance of personal rehabilitation. He is sailing in unexplored seas, of whose shoals and rocks, currents and tides, treacherous calms and sudden tempests the charts of statesmanship can give no hint. He may be a courageous, skilful and fortunate navigator; he may sail boldly and well: but the probability of disaster is never far removed, and the disaster may leave the fair vessel of his hopes little better than a wreck.

One of these tremendous episodes broke, while yet

he was new to the task of Empire, upon Lord Dalhousie's successor. There are those who regard Lord Canning as having merely reaped in danger and gloom the harvest which Dalhousie had sown in hope, confidence and joy, and as having confronted the dire reaction which awaits premature projects of reform.

Other, and perhaps more trustworthy, guides hold that such a view is scarcely justified by the facts of the case. Those who saw most of the Mutiny, who studied it with profoundest attention and with the best opportunities for its right understanding, considered that it took its rise in a military panic, was a military outbreak, and was in no material respect dependent on popular support or popular grievances.

Whatever its origin, an unexampled and appalling crisis had to be met. Lord Canning met it in a manner of which every Englishman may be proud—with firmness, confidence, magnanimity, with calm inflexible justice. On a stage, crowded with heroic personages, he stood—an impressive central figure—too unmoved and too undemonstrative, too completely master of himself to suit the excited tempers and unbalanced judgments of an epoch rife with unprecedented catastrophe; but rising above the onset of ephemeral hostility with a dignity, which, as the scene recedes and we are able more justly to appreciate its proportions, places him high on the list of those great officers of State, whose services to their country entitle them to the esteem and gratitude of every loyal Englishman.

The crisis passed. As the din of battle died away it became apparent that a great work of pacification and reconstruction had to be accomplished. The fight was over, but, none the less, peace, in the sense of the civic good-will, which makes society possible—the friendly order that holds communities together—had to be restored. European and native stood glaring at each other—their swords still stained with kinsman's blood. In some parts of the Empire the entire fabric of British administration had temporarily disappeared. In many, it had been grievously dislocated. The task of governing an alien race—always difficult—had become harder than ever. There were dreadful, maddening recollections which had to be obscured; fierce animosities to be assuaged, a fierce spirit of revenge to be exorcised. The English were in no placable mood. They had been stirred by an agony which had gone to their very heart's core. They had suffered long and acutely, again and again, with little to support them but a stern purpose of vengeance or the desperate resolve to sell their lives as dearly as possible. They had fought against odds, which seemed to render destruction inevitable. There had been the supreme efforts of daring, of endurance—long, staggering marches under the cruel Indian sun—desperate encounters—the hair-breadth escapes of some, the tragic end of others, the suffering of all. It was difficult for men, with such experiences fresh in their minds, to pass to the tame legality of peaceful existence and to regard their recent antagonists with

the amity due to a fellow-citizen. Order was indeed restored, but the body politic still quivered with its recent convulsion. Every part of the great administrative machine required change, renovation, adaptation to new times, new wants. The Army, the Courts, the Finances, the very structure of the government had to be recast. The time had arrived for discarding some dignified simulacra, whose life and use had long departed—some fictions which had long ceased to serve a useful end. It was no easy task which confronted Lord Canning, and he had to perform it, throughout, amid a tempest of animadversion. From every quarter came the fierce blasts of disapproval, dissatisfaction, dislike. The tendency to hasty criticism of remote matters—about which it is easy for those who know little to feel strongly—becomes uncontrollable, when national sentiment is profoundly stirred. It was uncontrollable in Lord Canning's time, in high quarters and low. In Calcutta public opinion ran high. In England, in Parliament and in society, its tone was menacing. Lord Ellenborough's ungovernable mood found vent in an onslaught so unmeasured, unreasonable, unjust, that its very extravagance operated to defeat its end: but such onslaughts try the nerve of the strongest. Lord Canning stood unmoved and immovable—just, tenacious of purpose, conscious of its rectitude—not to be driven from it by the vituperation of a minister or the murmurs of an irritated community. It is possible that a man of a more effusive, less self-contained

temperament might have been more fortunate in carrying the sympathies of his countrymen fully with him, and concentrating upon himself the enthusiastic loyalty which Englishmen lavish on a ruler in whom they feel confidence. But it is by no means certain that such a statesman would have met, as completely as did Lord Canning, the general requirements of the situation. He had to lay down the lines for the future, not only of the English sojourners in India, but for two hundred millions of native inhabitants; and his wisdom during the struggle and after it,—his calm assurance in the ultimate triumph of his country, his impartial mood, his unwavering resolution to be just, his hatred of violence and excess secured the result that the disaster left behind it so little that an Englishman need regret, or a native resent—that the breach between the conflicting nationalities, though deep and serious, was not irremediable—that extravagance and ferocity in the stern work of retribution were the exception and not the rule—that, as the flood of anarchy subsided, it left a soil rich with the materials of orderly progress and friendly co-operation, and that the generation, which followed the Mutiny, has witnessed European and native labouring, hand in hand, at the task of national development.

How, in the face of much to discourage, disturb and disappoint, this work was accomplished, it is the object of the following pages to narrate.

It is their object, too, to throw light on the character of the task which the English nation has

undertaken in the government of India, its problems, its difficulties, its frightful risks. They will show the liability of great aggregates of ignorant folk to groundless panic, the recklessness which such panics induce, their unexpected and inexplicable effect on the conduct of individuals or communities which suddenly become proof alike against the demonstrations of logic, the teaching of experience, even the strong sway of lifelong usage. They will show how small is the insight into men's temper and conduct which the best skill and experience can achieve in the case of races whose hereditary temperaments and beliefs differ essentially from our own, and who unconsciously shroud their real feelings in impenetrable reserve. Now that a generation has passed away and the subsiding dust of contemporary controversy has given place to a clearer atmosphere, some principles of statesmanship stand out distinctly as established by the events of the Mutiny. It was a tremendous lesson. It strained our resources at home; it weakened our position in Europe; it imperilled the very fabric of our Indian rule. It was written in blood, in tears, in a vast aggregate of human sorrow and suffering. Its stern truths were branded, as it were, with a hot iron upon the national conscience. It is well that the English nation—which, amid the excitements of popular government, is apt to be indifferent to remote dangers, and the causes which produce them—should lay those truths to heart.

The history of the government of dependencies, a

cynic has observed, is mostly the history of failures. It is easy in such a case to fail. The problems involved in the task of ruling remote and alien populations are complicated, abstruse, subtle, and likely to betray those who solve them carelessly into deplorable mistakes. Such mistakes lie thick in the annals of the Mutiny. Such a mistake, for instance, it was for the rulers of a country such as England—with vast interests to protect in every quarter of the globe, and with two wars on hand—to have so far yielded to the Parliamentary pressure for economy as to cut down its army to a level below the ordinary peace estimates, so that the effort necessary to preserve India left England practically defenceless. Such a mistake, again, was it for the Rulers of India to allow the proportion of English to native troops to sink far below the level which every good authority pronounced to be compatible with safety, and to pigeon-hole in some comfortable bureau alike Lord Dalhousie's demonstrations of danger and his projects for removing it. As it was, the utter defencelessness of the English position in many parts of India—the light-heartedness with which large arsenals, commanding forts, dangerous centres of native disaffection, important European communities, wide stretches of territory had been left without an English soldier, seemed, when once the outbreak had occurred, like the reckless audacity of a race doomed to self-destruction.

Such a mistake, again, was the hasty judgment

pronounced by English statesmen on Lord Canning's action, and allowed by its publication, at a most critical moment, in India to aggravate the intensity of the crisis. Good sense and right feeling in the end prevailed, but not till grave risk had been incurred, and the difficulty of pacification had been seriously enhanced. It seems hardly credible to us who read of it in cold blood, that responsible politicians should have acted and spoken as they spoke and acted then, and that the head of an English Ministry should, in ignorance of the real facts, have condemned his Sovereign's representative in the presence of a mutinous army and a half-suppressed insurrection. But the dangers of Parliamentary government of dependencies are great, and, in the hot air of a party fight, or the pressure of a party emergency, the interests of England in India, and the claims of those who represent them, are apt to become obscured. Such an episode is a warning how easily the forms of popular Government may lend themselves to rash judgment, violent tone, unjust and ill-considered action, and how seriously the aberrations of a popular assembly may embarrass the fulfilment of an imperial task.

CHAPTER II

Biographical

In the fourteenth century Lord Canning's ancestors were great people in Bristol. William Canynges, a wealthy cloth-worker and ship-owner, was Bailiff of that city in 1361, was six times its Mayor, and its representative in three successive Parliaments. His son was also Mayor. Of his grandsons, one, Thomas, became Lord Mayor of London, and took an active part in the suppression of the tumults headed by Jack Cade. Another grandson, William, maintained the family prestige by being four times Mayor of Bristol. In this capacity he had the honour of entertaining, successively, Margaret of Anjou and Edward the Fourth, and established a more lasting claim to the gratitude of posterity by restoring the beautiful church of St. Mary, Redcliffe, which had been damaged by a thunderstorm. His monument is still to be seen there, and 'Mr. Canynges cofre,' long preserved in the Muniment Room of the church, acquired unexpected celebrity by supplying the material with which Chatterton constructed the most curious literary fraud of modern times, the Rowley forgeries.

His nephew, Thomas Canning, by his marriage with Agnes Salmon, heiress of Foxcote in Warwickshire,

acquired a position in that county, and his lineal descendants continued to reside there till, in the course of the present century, the estate passed, in default of heirs male, to another family.

At the beginning of the seventeenth century (1618), George, the youngest son of one of these Foxcote Cannings, received a grant of the Manor of Garvagh, in Londonderry, from James I. A branch of the Canning family was thus established in Ireland, and had some rude experience of the popular dislike of the intrusive Saxon. William, the son of the original grantee, was killed by the Papists in O'Neill's rebellion. His son, George, was attainted in King James the Second's Parliament at Dublin. Despite these vicissitudes, the family stuck sturdily to their estate, and strengthened their position by various good matrimonial connections. Stratford Canning, fourth in descent from the original grantee, was the father of three sons, George, Paul, and Stratford. He was an austere and irascible parent, whose creaking shoes sounded a note of terror, in after years, in his children's recollection. Both George and Stratford aroused his wrath by lovers' entanglements, and were turned loose upon the world. Both died early, but both left sons who were to fill a large space in contemporary history. Stratford defied his father's ire, married the lady of his choice, settled as a banker in London, and at his death left behind him a six months' infant, who, half a century later, made the name of Stratford de Redcliffe a potent factor in

Eastern diplomacy. George was admitted to the English Bar, lived in a cultured coterie, achieved some success in the lighter branches of literature, and enhanced his personal embarrassments and his father's resentment by marrying a beautiful but portionless young Irishwoman. In the midst of family troubles and bootless projects of rehabilitation, he became the father of a son who was destined to become famous in the annals of English statesmanship. Little, indeed, did the Fates seem then to promise that this child of sorrow should be Prime Minister of England, and the embodiment of all that was most brilliant in the politics of his day.

The genius of George Canning soon soared above family misfortunes. His uncle, Stratford, came to his aid. Eton and Christ Church smiled upon the accomplished scholar; London society welcomed a brilliant acquisition: the discrimination of Pitt secured a valuable recruit. Good Tories were rejoiced to have their views enforced by the wit which flashed in the best of political squibs. He had now climbed the dizzy heights of office, and held the portfolio of Foreign Affairs.

The successful statesman's fortunes were crowned in 1800 by his marriage with Joan, daughter, and co-heiress with the Duchess of Portland, of General Scott, a gentleman whose successes at the whist-table had made his daughters wealthy women. In 1812 George Canning was living in the enjoyment of great domestic happiness at Gloucester Lodge, an

Italian villa which lay between Kensington and Brompton, and which derived its name from its first owner—the Duchess of Gloucester. From the Duchess it passed to her daughter, the Princess Sophia, and from her to Mr. Canning.

Here, on the 14th of December, 1812, George Canning's third son—the subject of the present biography—was born. He was named Charles John. At this time his two elder brothers, George Charles and William Pitt, were alive. A daughter, who became Marchioness of Clanricarde, was born in 1804. When Charles Canning was ten years old, and a student at Mr. Carmalt's, a famous private school in those days, at Putney, an event occurred which was very nearly altering the whole current of his father's life. In 1822, Mr. Canning,—whose refusal to prosecute the Queen had mortally offended his royal master, and, for the time, ruined his Parliamentary prospects, accepted the post of Governor-General of India, about to become vacant on Lord Hastings' retirement. His experience at the Board of Control, where it had been his duty to watch, sometimes to curb, and finally to sanction Lord Hastings' daring programme, may have reconciled him to the change. It was not fated, however, that Canning should quit the scene of his many triumphs. In the following autumn, while he was paying a farewell visit to his constituents at Liverpool[1], Lord Castlereagh's tragic end brought

[1] Canning, when at Liverpool, was a frequent guest of Mr. Gladstone of Seaforth House. It stood on a flat stretch of country,

about a new series of political combinations, and obliged the King to accept Canning as leader of the House of Commons. His appointment as Foreign Secretary put an end to all thoughts of India. Thirty-three years later his son had the same offer, and accepted it.

In 1824, Charles Canning was sent to Eton, where his father's brilliant reputation as statesman, man of letters and wit, ensured him a cordial reception. Dr. Goodall, the Provost, ordained that the Minister's son should undergo his entrance examination, not, as was usual, at his tutor's, but in his father's house,—a questionable privilege, so far as young Canning's feelings were concerned, for it involved the consequence that the dreaded ordeal should be passed in his father's presence. Mr. Chapman, afterwards Bishop of Colombo, the official on whom the duty devolved, has recorded the anxiety with which the father watched the boy's progress through his examination. The passage selected was the description, in the *Aeneid*, of the storm which shattered the fleet of Aeneas, and the famous aposiopesis in which Neptune turns away from punishing the outbreak of the rebel winds to the gentler task of calming the waves and restoring peace to the ocean—

> 'Quos ego—sed praestat motos componere fluctus.'

The trial—a severe one for youthful nerves—was

north of the town, overlooking the sea. Here he would sit, enjoying the prospect, while a son of the house, William Ewart Gladstone, was playing on the strand below.—Bell, 321.

safely passed; the anxious father pronounced approval with a 'not so bad,' and the young aspirant was pronounced to be fit for the Fourth Form, where, accordingly, he took his place, 4th September, 1824. The superstitious belief that the verses of Virgil, taken by chance, are fraught with prophetic meaning has expired: but a believer in the efficacy of the *Sortes Virgilianae* might have been confirmed in his creed by the unsuspected appositeness of the verses which chanced to be chosen for the young Etonian's preliminary task. No line that ever Virgil wrote could more aptly embody the main characteristic of Canning's future career—the merging of the duty of punishment in the more congenial process of pacification.

Earl Granville, who had begun a boy's friendship with 'Carlo' Canning among the strawberry-beds at Gloucester House, and who was a year or two his junior at Eton, has recorded a grateful remembrance of the protection which Charles Canning extended to him, as a new boy, in the rude experiences of school life, and of his welcome mediation as a pacificator at a fight in the playing fields, which neither combatant was loth to bring to an honourable close. 'His kindness to me,' writes Lord Granville, 'was continuous. His reputation at Eton was high as to ability: the respect and attachment felt for him by his contemporaries the same as has been the case through all his life.'

Charles Canning's Eton career, though marked by

no extraordinary achievements, and not wholly unchequered by the Olympian wrath of Dr. Keate, was not without distinction. There is evidence of his having attained more than average proficiency in the all-important art of Latin versification.

We have some contemporaneous sketches of the Eton of that day in Mr. Milne Gaskell's letters to his father, to his friend Arthur Hallam, and others, and in one or two from Canning himself. Sir Francis Doyle, who was at Eton from 1822 to 1827, mentions a debating club, of which Arthur Hallam, Gladstone, Selwyn, Lord Arthur Harvey, Lord Elgin, Lord Canning, and Lord Blachford, were the principal members. 'The perfect intellectual freedom,' he writes, 'bestowed on us by the ease and leisure of our idle school, had its good as well as its bad side.' It had, certainly, some rough aspects to the new-comer, not least the portentous figure of the Head Master, shaking his red and shaggy eyebrows, so prominent that Kinglake describes him as habitually employing them instead of arms and hands to point out any object to which he wished to direct attention. Before this awful being, one May morning, little Gaskell was summoned. ''Εκπορευομένου' is the fatal word that speaks his doom—a doom that sometimes, in this epoch of flagellation, eighty victims underwent in a single morning. Gaskell waits trembling in the ante-room the arrival of the judge and executioner. 'He first flogged one of the collegers and then called me. I begged him to give me my "first

fault." He answered that I had committed an error very early. I could scarcely refrain from tears, but did, and in his usual harsh manner he said, "Go along, sir, go along."'

The epoch of fagging was at its height. One little despot has three attendants; one gets the milk, anothei the kettle, another the rolls and butter. Sometimes Gaskell has to run to 'Cripps for ham, bacon, bread, chocolate, &c.; then to receive several blows because I was not quick enough—then to boil eggs for Taunton, or employed in the servile offices of brushing Halifax's clothes and tying his shoes.' 'Rolles got spurs, and rode some of us over a leap, positively impossible to be leapt over with a person on one's back, and every time (which is every time) we cannot accomplish it, he spurs us violently; and my thigh is quite sore with the inroads made by this dreadful spur. My *Poetae Graeci* is destroyed, my new coat completely ruined.' In 1826 Gaskell writes of more agreeable themes. 'Now comes the most gratifying, transporting, edifying, delightful, charming piece of information. I will begin by telling you that Canning is very considerably below me in the school. It is true that I noticed him twice, I mean, invited him to breakfast. It is true that I have done him two copies of verses. From what I have seen of him I think him rather disposed to be idle, but clever, quick, spirited, affectionate. Canning was very much taken with these little civil offices, but, as Horace says, "Di exagitent

me," if I expected any return.' Canning, however, made an unexpectedly generous return for his patron's good services, for, before long, there comes a hospitable letter from Mrs. Canning, inviting 'Carlo' and his friends to a party at Salt Hill. Thereupon followed many pleasant expeditions to the great statesman's house, delightful and impressive to the boyish imagination, which continue till Gaskell sees his friend's father at Chiswick, lying on the couch from which he was never to rise. There is one pretty scene—George Canning walking back with the boys from Salt Hill to Eton, and, near the end of the long field, looking over Carlo's holiday verses, the subject being Pantheia and Abradatas. An epithet is wanted for 'alâ'—'celeri' is suggested and rejected; then someone suggests 'faustâ.' Yes, 'faustâ' will do—'faustâ Victoria protegit alâ.' So the phantom figures—father and son and friend—pass away into the Olympian shades.

'Canning looked well at Surly,' so runs another letter; 'he rode there, and leapt all the way, on a large black horse. He is twelve years old. I got nothing but some lobster and half a bottle of cider.' On another occasion we find the young debaters busied with a motion for discontinuing the *Morning Chronicle*, on the ground of its constant pugilistic reports, and the motion lost by Gladstone's casting-vote. In December, 1827, we have Charles Canning writing to his friend Gaskell a pleasant school-boy letter:—

'Moss will be captain of the boats next year, and I shall pull in the ten-oar. I mess with Hodgson and Moss now: perhaps Cowper will mess with us next half; those three will be my greatest and only "cons" except old Handley. I gave leaving books to Gladstone, Hamilton, Chisholm Ma., Doyle, Lord Bruce, and Sutton Ma. Handley, Gladstone, Mr. Bruce, Lord Bruce, Hodgson, and myself set up a Salt Hill Club at the end of this half. We met every whole holiday, or half, as was convenient, after 12, and went up to Salt Hill to bully the fat waiter, eat toasted cheese, and drink egg-wine. In our meetings, as well as at almost every time, Gladstone went by the name of Mr. Tipple; Lord Bruce, Dr. Roberts; Handley, Miss Judy Myers; Mr. Bruce, Mr. Cranmer; Canning Mr. Coxhead. Hamilton, who was Mr. Demster, would have been in the club, but was prevented by his having to show up a punishment to Keate every day at one, which cut up his "after 12" completely. The punishment was inflicted for his having taken a conspicuous part in all the late riots.'

Charles Canning did not remain at Eton for the most interesting period of a public school-boy's career, the last; for, having reached the upper division of the Fifth Form, he became the pupil of the Rev. Thomas Shore, a Bedfordshire clergyman, a nephew of the Governor-General of India who succeeded Cornwallis, and is known to fame as Lord Teignmouth. This gentleman, an accomplished scholar, received a few pupils of distinction, and equipped them — more

assiduously, perhaps, than the genial potentates of Eton—for the arena of academic life. One of Mr. Shore's daughters remembers still the impression created by Canning's air of thoughtful intelligence—his modest tones—his girl-like blushes—his kindness to the little daughters of the house. Here Charles Canning was joined by the grandson of the first Lord Harris, with whom he formed a life-long friendship, by Lord Granville, and Mr. Charles Howard. Here 'ingenuous arts' blossomed, as they ought, into gracious behaviour. 'Lord Granville,' says the chronicler, 'made himself as charming to us little girls as ever he did since, I suppose, to the finest ladies or to a public audience.' From this agreeable tutelage Canning passed in December, 1828, to Oxford, and was entered as a student of Christ Church, where his father had resided forty years before. Two of his Oxford contemporaries and associates, Dalhousie and Elgin, were destined, as himself, to occupy the post of Governor-General of India. 'I was about a year with him at Christ Church,' writes Lord Granville, 'where he was one of a brilliant set. Gladstone, Sidney Herbert, Lord Lincoln, James Hope, the present Dean of Christ Church, Lord Selborne, Lord Cardwell, and Lord Malmesbury, had just taken their degrees: but Lord Elgin, Lord Dalhousie, Fred. Bruce, Stephen Denison, were still there.' Among Canning's other associates were Mr. (Sir) Robert Phillimore and Lord De Tabley, whose friendship lasted to the grave.

In this congenial society Lord Canning led a life of

cultured enjoyment—somewhat cold in manner to the outer world, but endeared to the inner circle of his associates by geniality, taste and humour. He devoted himself to the studies of the place, and in 1831 won the College prize for a Latin poem on 'Caractacus,' which he recited, standing beneath his father's portrait, in the great Hall of Christ Church.

'It was a remarkable scene,' writes Sir R. Phillimore. 'In that magnificent banquetting-room are hung portraits of students who have reflected honour upon the House, which reared them, by the distinctions which they have won in after life. Underneath the portrait of George Canning—the recollection of whose brilliant career and untimely end was still fresh in the memory of men—stood the son, still in the prime of youth, recalling in his eminently handsome countenance the noble features of the portrait, while repeating the prize poem which would have gladdened his father's heart[1].'

'Canning,' writes Earl Granville, 'was like Hoppner's picture of his father as a young man—a great gentleman in character and demeanour. He was handsome, with singularly fine eyes. He was fond of sport—hunting, shooting, and especially fishing. . . . He had extraordinary powers of continuous work for months and years, when the occasion arose, together with a faculty for being perfectly idle for long periods.'

In 1827 Mr. Canning had died. His widow was

[1] Mr. George Canning's 'Iter ad Meccam' was regarded by contemporaries as the best prize-poem ever written.

created a Viscountess, with reversion to George Canning's sons. The eldest son, George Charles, had died in 1820. In September, 1828, the death of the second son, William Pitt, rendered Charles Canning heir to a Peerage, and placed him in a position sufficiently independent to justify his resolution to adopt a political career. In 1833 he took his degree, obtaining the honours of a first class in classics and a second in mathematics.

In September, 1833, he married the Hon. Charlotte Stuart, eldest daughter of Lord Stuart De Rothesay, a lady whose many graces and endowments of person and character bound all hearts to her alike in England and India, and whose death invested the closing hours of her husband's career with a pathetic interest.

The pleasures of married life did not still the promptings of ambition. Charles Canning's thoughts were bent on Parliament. In August, 1836, he was returned as member for Warwick. His experience of the House of Commons, however, was brief: for Parliament was prorogued within the month, and on the 15th March, 1837, Viscountess Canning died. In the following month Lord Canning took his seat in the House of Lords

On Lord Melbourne's resignation in August, 1841, and the formation of Sir Robert Peel's Ministry, Lord Aberdeen received the portfolio of Foreign Affairs, and was glad to nominate Lord Canning to the Under-Secretaryship in a department in which his father had acquired so much distinction. Lord

Canning accepted the offer, nor was he to be tempted from it by an invitation which he received in the following year from Lord Ellenborough—on his appointment to succeed Lord Auckland as Governor-General of India—to accompany him as Private Secretary. The two men were destined, in after years, to come into violent collision on an Indian topic.

Canning worked hard at his duties, but the presence of his chief in the Upper House relieved him of the necessity—indeed deprived him of the opportunity—of Parliamentary explanation. But his character was felt. 'Lord Aberdeen,' says Earl Granville, 'had the most implicit confidence in him, and allowed him to do much of the Secretary of State's work. He was greatly looked up to in the office.'

Early in 1846 Sir Robert Peel, now in the troubled waters of the Corn Law Repeal, took the field again with a reconstituted Ministry, Mr. Gladstone at the Colonial Office, Lord Lincoln in Ireland, Lord Canning at the Woods and Forests. Sir Robert Peel's resignation in June of that year brought Lord John Russell to the Treasury and placed Lord Canning in opposition. He frequently, however, found himself in sympathy with the liberal measures of Lord John Russell's Cabinet, and in May, 1848, was the first to support Lord Lansdowne's motion in support of the removal of Jewish Disabilities, separating himself from almost the entire body of his former associates, and replying to Lord Ellenborough, who had moved an amendment on the second reading of the Bill.

On Lord John Russell's resignation in February, 1851, Lord Canning was invited by Lord Derby to fill a seat in his Cabinet as Foreign Secretary, an offer which, greatly as it was to his taste, he did not feel himself sufficiently in accordance with the Conservative Leader to accept. In Lord Aberdeen's Coalition Ministry of 1852, Lord John Russell became Foreign Secretary, and Lord Canning, not without some natural feelings of disappointment, accepted the unambitious post of Postmaster-General. Here he did good work, instituting numerous reforms and fighting a courageous battle against vested interests which stood in the way of departmental efficiency. Sir Rowland Hill described the years during which he served under Lord Canning at the Post Office as 'the most satisfactory period of his whole official career, that in which the course of improvement was steadiest, most rapid, and least chequered.'

In January, 1855, Lord Aberdeen was defeated on Mr. Roebuck's hostile motion for an inquiry into the conduct of the war, and resigned. Lord Canning was invited by Lord Palmerston to remain in office as Postmaster-General, with the addition of a seat in the Cabinet, an offer which he accepted.

By this time Lord Dalhousie's long and brilliant term of office as Governor-General of India was drawing to a close, and the question of his successor was occupying the thoughts of Ministers. The choice fell on Lord Canning. The son was free to accept the splendid offer from which his father

had, thirty-three years before, been compelled to turn away.

'I was the first person,' Lord Granville writes, 'who told him of the probability of the Governor-Generalship of India being offered to him. He at once discussed it, and seemed inclined to accept it. It was an interesting conversation. We had travelled by rail to Windsor, attended service at St. George's, and rode to Cleveden, where we had tea; and then dined at Salt Hill. His departure, and that of the beautiful and clever Lady Canning, created a great void in a very intimate society. Lord Palmerston gave me leave to write all Cabinet secrets to him while in India. . . . His departure for India deprived me of the most valuable assistance I ever had in speaking. He always gave me his opinion on my speeches. I knew his criticisms to be exactly what he thought, and I had absolute confidence in his judgment. There was no question, from the most important points of public and private life to the shape of a saddle, on which I did not desire his advice. He was one of my greatest friends. I am not sure that he was the most intimate. He had some natural reserve, and, on the other hand, I should not willingly have told him of things that I had said or done of which I was ashamed.'

On August 1st, 1855, Lord Canning was introduced at a Court of Directors and took the customary oath of office. In the evening he attended the banquet, with which, in that hospitable epoch, the Company

was wont to celebrate the outgoing of a new Governor-General. The speeches delivered on these occasions assumed the character of important political utterances, and were regarded with interest as indications of principle and policy. The Chairman, Mr. Elliot Macnaghten, proposed the new Governor-General's health. Lord Canning, in his reply, surprised and impressed his hearers by a grave and measured eloquence in every way worthy of the occasion. The remembrance of George Canning—the marked resemblance between father and son—the same handsome features, the noble brow and fine presence—no doubt predisposed the audience in the speaker's favour. But Lord Canning's speech was intrinsically excellent—weighty, dignified, imbued with a statesmanlike sense of the greatness and the difficulty of his task. He responded with gratitude to the Chairman's assurance of the confidence and co-operation of the Directors and of the two great bodies with which he would have mainly to do—the Civil Service and the Army. 'I know not,' the speaker continued in terms which, read in the light of after events, have a prophetic ring, 'I know not what course events may take. I hope and pray that we may not reach the extremity of war. I wish for a peaceful time of office, but I cannot forget that, in our Indian Empire, that greatest of all blessings depends upon a greater variety of chances and a more precarious tenure than in any other quarter of the globe. We must not forget that in the sky of India, serene as it

is, a small cloud may arise, at first no bigger than a man's hand, but which, growing bigger and bigger, may at last threaten to overwhelm us with ruin. What has happened once may happen again. The disturbing causes have diminished certainly, but are not dispelled. We have still discontented and heterogeneous peoples united under our sway; we have still neighbours before whom we cannot altogether lay aside our watchfulness; and we have a frontier configuration which renders it possible that at any moment causes of collision may arise. Besides, so intricate are our relations with some subsidiary States that I doubt whether, in an Empire so vast and so situated, it is in the power of the wisest Government, the most peaceful and the most forbearing, to command peace. But if we cannot command, we can at any rate deserve it by taking care that honour, good faith, and fair dealing are on our side: and then, if, in spite of us, it should become necessary to strike a blow, we can strike with a clear conscience. With blows so dealt, the struggle must be short and the issue not doubtful.'

The grave and melodious voice rang through the great assembly and created a profound impression. Lord Canning's hearers, some of whom had never heard him speak and others who had only heard his ordinary Parliamentary replies, felt that they were listening to no common man. They were noble words, instinct with a high purpose, a pledge, pure and high-toned. Nobly was Canning destined to redeem it.

It was decided that Lord Canning should take over charge on March 1st, and his journey to India was so timed as to allow of a short stay in Egypt, and of visits, *en route*, to Bombay, Ceylon, and Madras, where his old school-fellow, Lord Harris, now reigned as Governor. On November 4th, 1855, Lord and Lady Canning sailed from Marseilles; they landed at Alexandria on the 12th, and had their first taste of Eastern hospitality in the somewhat over-splendid arrangements made by the Pacha's order at Cairo for their reception. Some weeks were devoted to the sights of Egypt and a journey up the Nile. On January 26th, 1856, Lord Canning landed at Bombay, and the full tide of official ceremony began to flow. Lord Dalhousie had decreed that his successor should be royally welcomed; but, amid the pomps and festivities of a State reception, the new Governor-General gave early proof of the indefatigable industry which never flagged throughout his whole career. 'I have been unceasingly busy,' he wrote to Mr. Elliot Macnaghten, 'for two-thirds out of every twenty-four hours since our arrival: and by the 5th or 6th I hope to have seen nearly all that calls for ocular inspection in this city and its neighbourhood.'

Landing at Madras, the party spent a few days at Guindee Park, the Governor's country residence, and Lord Canning had an opportunity of renewing the memories of old school days in the society of Lord Harris. On the last day of February, he

disembarked at Calcutta, and proceeded at once to take the customary oaths of office and his seat in Council—'within five minutes after touching land,' as he wrote home—and to be introduced to the members of the Council. Of these Mr. (Sir) Barnes Peacock, a distinguished English barrister, and John Peter Grant, a civilian of exceptional ability, were the most influential. Another member, General John Low, had fought in the last Maráthá War, and since then had enjoyed a prolonged experience of native Courts and unusual facilities for reading native character. He was supposed to be of those who thought that Dalhousie had gone too far and too fast.

The new Governor-General plunged eagerly into business, and commenced from the outset that neglect of all consideration for health which he continued to the end with such disastrous effect. At the end of the first week he writes that, so great had been the pressure of business that he had found time 'only for one look out of doors' since arrival. The opportunities for converse with Lord Dalhousie were, of course, invaluable.

The tide of official work rolled in amain. 'Another fortnight is gone,' Lord Canning wrote towards the end of March, 'and I am beginning to gather up by slow degrees the threads of business, as it passes before me: but it is severe work to have to give up so much time to the bygones of almost every question that comes up; and some weeks more must

pass before I shall feel myself abreast of current events.'

Not many weeks had passed before the new Governor-General perceived that his hopes of a peaceful reign were little likely to be realised. The danger threatened from Persia. England was pledged to the independence of Herát; but that independence had always been precarious, more than once actually endangered. In 1852 a Persian force had seized the place, and nothing but the peremptory interference of the English Government had induced her to abandon the project of annexation. The Crimean War seemed to the Teheran politicians to afford an opportunity for reviving a favourite design. Material for a quarrel was soon forthcoming. Mr. Murray, the British representative, found it impossible to remain any longer at his post. A Persian army was presently on the march against Herát. English diplomacy had said its last word. War had become imminent.

Lord Canning watched with regret the lessening chances of a pacific settlement. 'Do not be afraid,' he wrote to the President of the Indian Board in April, 'of my being unduly hasty to punish Persia. Unless the Shah should steam up the Húglí with Murray swinging at his yard-arm, I hope that we shall be able to keep the peace until your instructions arrive.' The prospects of peace, however, became daily fainter. 'My hope of an accommodation,' the Governor-General wrote to the President in August, 'has almost died out. I contemplate the prospect of

the inglorious and costly operations, which lie before us, with more disgust than I can express.'

The quarrel went briskly forward. In the summer Lord Canning received instructions to prepare for the despatch of an army from Bombay, and in November war was officially declared. The choice of a commander for the expedition and the details of its equipment necessarily involved much thought, talk, and correspondence, and made a formidable addition to the numerous and varied administrative topics which, in the ordinary course, called for the Governor-General's attention.

A war with Persia involved a thorny question as to the aid that should be given to the Amír of Kábul—whether he should be helped at all, and if helped, to what extent and upon what conditions. The English authorities were of opinion that a blister to Persia might, with excellent effect, be applied from the side of Kandahár. Herbert Edwardes, stationed on the frontier, warmly advocated the project of an alliance with the Amír. At the beginning of 1857 a treaty, negotiated by Sir John Lawrence and Edwardes, bound the old Dost by a tie which, happily, he observed conscientiously through times when the hostility of Kábul, in the rear of the English, would have added disastrously to the difficulties of the situation. 'I have made an alliance with the British Government,' he exclaimed, when the treaty was signed, 'and, come what may, I will keep it till death.'

Lord Canning, who at the other end of the telegraph wire at Calcutta had superintended the negotiation, complimented Edwardes on its satisfactory issue with a generous and hearty recognition of good service, which was habitual to him. 'I feel the more bound to do this,' he wrote, 'because the first suggestion of a meeting came from you. . . . It would be a good thing if all diplomatic conferences were conducted as satisfactorily and set forth as lucidly as these have been.'

Persia was not the only anxiety. Within the confines of India itself the course of events did not flow with unbroken smoothness during Lord Canning's first year of office. Outram had welcomed his arrival with a telegram—'All is well in Oudh;' but the announcement had been premature. Outram had now gone away to England, in ill health, and all had certainly not been going well with his successor—a hot-headed official, of the order of those whose destiny it is to be the marplots of diplomacy and thorns in the flesh of their employers. Lord Canning had to taste the bitterness which a refractory subordinate infuses into the cup of high official life. His remonstrances fell on unheeding ears. The progress of dethroning an ancient royalty—necessarily an ungracious one—was made doubly distressful. Complaints became numerous and loud. The Governor-General wrote that his subordinates were placing him in the humiliating position of promising redress which they failed to give; nor was the mischief ended till,

in the following spring, on its becoming clear that Outram would be employed in the Persian Expedition, an unexceptionable substitute was found in the person of Sir Henry Lawrence, who took charge of his duties at Lucknow a few weeks before the first outburst of the Mutiny.

Periods such as that of the Mutiny afford but scanty space for the personal biography of those who play a prominent part in them. Such men lead only a public existence. Their thoughts, their hopes, their efforts, are concentrated on public cares. Lord Canning's life during the fateful years 1857 and 1858 was one unflagging effort to keep pace with the torrential flow of events which followed each other with a rapidity too great even for diligence as phenomenal as his.

It would be difficult to exaggerate the multifariousness or the importance of these demands on his judgment. The general course of the various campaigns which the suppression of the Mutiny involved, was, to a large extent, under his superintendence and control; he was in immediate touch with the principal Commanders throughout, who looked to him for orders. Questions of the utmost difficulty—such, for instance, as the abandonment of Pesháwar, in the critical weeks before the fall of Delhi—were constantly presenting themselves for immediate decision; Parliamentary discussion of Indian topics added intensity to the controversial furnace in which Lord Canning lived. He had to watch the growth of public sentiment,

to guide it in safe channels, and repress its undue violence; and his task had to be performed under conditions well calculated to disturb the most steadfast equilibrium. There were great topics on which the fate of an Empire hung; but little topics swarmed about him—like a cloud of midges—all the more irritating, possibly, for their minuteness. A convulsion which breaks down all ordinary barriers and overrides all ordinary rules of discipline, is certain to entail official blunders and collisions. Stupidity, decently latent in times of peaceful routine, leaps to light. There will be a misapprehension of duties, quarrels more acute than usual; the excited man who does too much; the nervous man who is afraid to do anything; the wrong-headed man who does the wrong thing. Sometimes, moreover, Nature seems to have provided that the men who have greatest capacity for blundering have the largest gifts of insistency in self-defence. Many such men now crossed Lord Canning's path. Many such questions—whose intrinsic insignificance is no measure of the toil and vexation they occasion to those who have to decide them, beset him.

His temperament was that which treats small things and large with the same precise and conscientious care, and so renders official life a burthen too heavy for the strongest shoulders. There is a habit of mind, well known to the student of official pathology, which shrinks in aversion from the rude expedients by which some men get through a vast amount of work. The

just, the fastidious, the scrupulous, are its especial victims. Such a man has a horror of imperfection, of inexactness, of the hardship or mischief which inexactness may easily produce. He will not indite an incorrect sentence, slur over an inconvenient difficulty, or pronounce an ill-considered decision. He knows how the thing ought to be done; his conscience forbids him to do it, or to let it be done, in any other fashion. He will not slight it himself; he will not hand it over to another who might be more easily satisfied. One question after another is put aside for further thought, for further knowledge, for the last few touches which an artist loves to give to his work, but which, unhappily, so seldom are the last. Meanwhile, the world does not stand still: the tide of business rolls onward, rude and strong; the impossibility of coping with it becomes obvious; the arrears become so huge that a little more or less is not worth consideration; the offender becomes desperate. The official machine is obstructed at a hundred points; and sturdy workers of the rough and ready order are complaining that, in the research of a too exquisite perfection, the practical work of administration is being brought to a standstill. The offender entrenches himself behind a barricade of office boxes, each of which protests with dumb mouth against the dilatory mood which hinders its contents from disposal. Thence he defies those who preach to him that with statesmen, as with women, hesitation often means ruin.

Such barricades, it is to be feared, rose high in Lord Canning's study. An embassy of his colleagues, on one occasion, brought some friendly pressure to bear upon their too assiduous chief, and urged him to part with some portion of his task, which it was certain that he could never accomplish. The reluctant Governor-General hovered uneasily about the vast accumulation, finding in each instance some especial reason against abandonment, and was at last with difficulty persuaded to bow to the stern destiny which has decreed that human life shall be short, human energy exhaustible, and the art of administration difficult and long.

Canning, however, could be prompt enough when promptitude was evidently essential, and a crisis had now arrived which called imperatively for instantaneous action.

During the early months of the year 1857 various symptoms of a mutinous temper in the troops in the immediate neighbourhood of Calcutta, and at Berhampur, a military post a hundred miles to the north, sounded the first note of danger. Then, when the troubles in Bengal seemed to have subsided, outbreaks of similar character in Upper India, at Meerut and Lucknow, showed that the malady was no merely local one; and, while these were being dealt with, there came the astounding news that the Sepoys at Meerut, the strongest post, as to European troops, in India, had thrown off allegiance, murdered their officers, sacked the Station, and effected their escape

and that the rebel soldiery were in possession of the capital of the Mughals. Lord Canning knew that he was confronted by the gravest emergency that had ever beset the English in India.

Before dealing with the Mutiny, it will be well to take a survey of the general situation and of the conditions under which the Government entered upon this tremendous trial of its strength.

CHAPTER III

THE INDIA WHICH LORD CANNING FOUND

LORD CANNING'S predecessor had on his homeward journey recorded, with almost dying hand, the achievements of his long and prosperous reign. To few, indeed, of the rulers of mankind has such a retrospect been accorded. Success in the ventures of War and the labours of Peace—improvement in every department of administration—progress in every phase of civil life—the triumph of enlightened beneficence—such is the note which rings through the whole exultant strain. Nor was the boast an empty one. But if Dalhousie left India prosperous, orderly, progressive and replete with the outward and visible signs of efficient government, there were quarters in which the cold breezes of adversity might easily arise; and he himself had preluded his narrative with the warning that no prudent man, with any knowledge of the case, would ever venture to predict unbroken tranquillity within our Eastern possessions. Everything, however, in the external relations of India seemed to promise it. Burma had been cowed into the terror which was the best assurance of friendship with a Court too barbarous to know its

own weakness. Nepál, under a sagacious Minister, and with a Thibetan War on hand, was little likely to break the peace she had observed for forty years. The Chieftain whom, in an unlucky moment for humanity, the British Government had placed on the throne of Kashmír had laid hold of the great Pro-consul's dress in Darbár and cried: 'Thus I grasp the skirts of the British Government, and I will never let go my hold.' A treaty concluded in 1855 with the Amír of Kábul bound him to common friends and foes, and Lord Dalhousie could report that every portion of our Western frontier was covered against hostile attack by the barrier of a treaty with a friendly power. But an Empire within whose confines, either by conquest, failure of heirs, or the stern decree of paramount authority, four kingdoms and various minor principalities had in less than a decade been merged, could scarcely fail to contain much smouldering disaffection or to provide the occasion which would fan it to a blaze. Oudh, the latest acquisition, lying in the very heart of the North-Western Provinces, was full of explosive material. The King had yielded without a blow; but the results of a century of anarchy were not to be effaced by the heroic remedy of annexation. The administration had been supremely corrupt; the patrons of corruption were numerous and influential. The disbandment of the royal army sent 60,000 peasants back to their homes, stripped of their livelihood and ripe for disturbance. The local magnates, following the

familiar Indian precedent, had taken advantage of a Court paralysed by profligacy to do what they pleased; and their pleasure was that of sturdy warriors, entrenched in forest fastnesses and followed by small armies of retainers as little compunctious as themselves. For such men might is right, and the doctrine had been, no doubt, rudely applied against rivals and dependants. A British official, who conducted an inquiry, a few years previous to annexation, into the condition of the Province, had travelled through a tract of eighty miles which Nature had designed to be a garden but which one of the Oudh magnates had reduced to a desert. When the British administrator appeared upon the scene, bent on beneficent projects for an oppressed peasantry, backed up by Courts which could not be bribed and forces which it was impossible to resist, the Oudh Tálukdár found himself in a new and uncongenial world. The European officials regarded him with no friendly eye, as an oppressor of the poor and a useless incumbrancer of the soil. His title-deeds were strictly scanned; his vague prerogatives were disallowed. Tenant-rights, of which the tenant himself had scarcely dreamed, were boldly affirmed. Great dissatisfaction, accordingly, existed in the landed classes of Oudh. When the Mutiny came, the tenantry sided with their traditional lords against an alien protector, and the rebel soldiers, themselves for the most part drawn from the peasantry of Oudh, found in the strongholds and jungles of the landholders their

best refuge and in many of the landholders their warmest allies.

Sir James Outram, the Head Official of the newly-annexed Province, had welcomed Lord Canning's arrival with a telegraphic announcement that all was well in Oudh; but failing health had driven Outram to Europe, and his successor had by violent temper and want of judgment materially enhanced the dangers of an already perilous situation. In the meantime, the dethroned Sovereign was established in a suburb of Calcutta, and was consoling himself by the mission of various members of his family to plead his cause before the authorities in London. Those who profess to find elsewhere than in military disaffection the causes of the great outbreak of 1857, are accustomed to point to the presence of the ex-King of Oudh at Calcutta as one of the motive causes of the convulsion. No evidence, however, has ever been produced that the ex-King, either directly or indirectly, took part in the movement; while amongst the circumstances connected with the Mutiny, which favoured the fortunes of the English, may reasonably be counted the fact that, when Oudh threw off its allegiance, the natural centre of local loyalty was not on the spot to afford a nucleus for disaffection.

North-westward across the Doáb, well placed in a commanding position on the Jumna, such a nucleus existed. The historical capital of the Mughals—so the will of Heaven or the fatuity of man had decreed—was now at once a strong fortress, a first-

class arsenal, and the home of the dethroned dynasty. Here Bahádur Sháh—faded image of the great Mughal —still lived, a splendid pensioner, impotent for everything but sensuality, intrigue and crime. Half a century before, when Lord Wellesley and Lake were shattering the confederacy of Maráthá States, the English had rescued his ancestor—a blind, helpless old man—from the oppression of the Maráthás and control of the French. Lord Wellesley, with much respectful language, had reduced him to a puppet, consoled him with a good pension and splendid ceremonial for the loss of all real power, and, repenting of his original intention, allowed him to continue to reside at Delhi. Here, though with ever diminishing prestige, the heir of the House of Timúr lived on in quasi-royal state. The unwisdom of the arrangement had been recognised and denounced by Lord Dalhousie. 'Here,' he said, 'we have a strong fortress in the heart of one of the principal cities of our Empire, and in entire command of the chief magazine of the Upper Provinces. It lies so exposed both to assault and to the dangers arising from the carelessness of the people living around it, that it is a matter for surprise that no accident has occurred to it.' The only effectual remedy was, the Governor-General observed, to transfer the stores into the Palace, 'which would then be kept by us as a British post, capable of maintaining itself against any hostile manœuvre, instead of being, as it is now, the source of positive danger, and, perhaps,

not unfrequently, the focus of intrigues against our power.'

In 1856 the question was again brought under notice by the death of the King's heir, and Lord Canning strongly enforced his predecessor's view. The phantom dignities of the King were, he pointed out, unmeaning, useless and dangerous. The ultimate decision was that the legal heir to the discrowned monarch should be recognised, but only on condition of surrendering the title of King and of residing elsewhere than at Delhi. The child of the King's favourite wife, whom his mother's ambition destined as his heir, was wholly put aside. The Queen was loud in lamentation and busy with intrigue. The young Prince, her son, was growing up a bitter hater of the English. In 1856, there is reason to believe, these feelings rose higher than usual in the royal circle. A famous priest was poisoning the King's ear, and performing propitiatory sacrifices to hasten the moment of restoration. Exciting rumours filled the air. Russia was to avenge the Crimea by the invasion of India and the re-establishment of the Mughals. Persia was to help. The hundred years' rule by the aliens of the West was about to close.

Vague talk took at last a more solid form, and in March, 1857, a proclamation, posted on the gates of the Great Mosque, announced that the King of Persia was marching to the destruction of the British Ráj, and that it behoved the faithful to be ready to fight the unbeliever. Thus was Delhi prepared to welcome

the mutineers who were soon to seek shelter behind her walls.

Further again to the North-West lay a Province which any one, forecasting the chances of tranquillity, might well have regarded as a likely centre of disturbance. The Punjab, when Lord Canning arrived in India, had been for seven years a portion of the British Empire. Not an hour of those seven years had been wasted by the administrators of the newly-conquered Province, in their task of extending to it the advantages of enlightened government. Under the two Lawrences and the able officials, whom Dalhousie crowded into his favourite acquisition, its prosperity had advanced by leaps and bounds. Yet the history of our connection with the Punjab was full of warning. At the beginning of the century the rising ambition of Ranjít Singh became a menace to Upper India. When in 1806 he crossed the Sutlej, and advanced pretensions to the territory between that river and the Jumna, Lord Minto, abandoning his policy of non-interference, had despatched a mission under Metcalfe and a British force to check the unwelcome intrusion. This combined argument induced the Sikh leader to sign a treaty of perpetual peace with the English, which he faithfully observed. The disorders, which followed on his death, had ended in a Praetorian tyranny. The army governed itself, ruled the State, and assumed a threatening attitude toward the English across the Sutlej. Hardinge massed his forces on the frontier. British victories at

Firozsháh in 1845, and, in the following year, at Aliwál and Sobráon, tamed the ambition of the Sikh leaders and advanced the British frontier to the west of the Sutlej. The infant Sovereign was restored, a Council of Regency appointed; benevolent despotism had full sway. The current of reform ran swift and strong. There was superficial tranquillity. Hardinge left India with the belief that not another shot need be fired for five years. In a few months the bloody fields of Chilianwála and Gujarát attested the vanity of such hopes. The army of the Punjab was conquered and disarmed; but the fact remained that the Sikhs who, under Ranjít Singh, had stood as one good line of defence against an assailant from the North-West—India's most vulnerable point—had shown themselves our sternest foes, and had cost us some of our bloodiest encounters. The Protectorate established by Lord Hardinge had completely broken down; and Lord Dalhousie having to determine between 'thorough conquest and incessant warfare,' had solved the alternative by annexation. But though Gujarát had crushed the Sikh Confederacy, the campaign had demonstrated how formidable a foe the Sikh nation could be, how easily the national feeling might be roused against the English. Seven years of alien administration could hardly have effaced national resentment or the desire of a warlike nation to assert its prowess in the field. 'The spirit of the whole Sikh people,' Lord Dalhousie had said, 'was inflamed by the bitterest animosity against us. . . . It was necessary to

take measures for obliterating a State which could never become a peaceful neighbour.' The experiment proved a splendid success. During the Mutiny the Sikh soldiery rendered invaluable service; but, in calculating the chances of that dire encounter, it is well to remember how easily matters might have gone otherwise—how, by the merest change of circumstances, we might have had the most soldierly population in India arrayed amongst our foes, and how supremely fortunate for the English it was that the annexation of the Punjab—the expediency of which was greatly called in question by the opponents of Dalhousie's policy—had been effectively carried out—the Sikh army broken up—the population disarmed, and that an exceptionally vigorous British administration had got the Province well in hand. Had an army—such as that with which Ranjít Singh threatened Upper India, or as that which Gough confronted at Chilianwála—been hovering in our rear during the siege of Delhi, the whole character of the struggle would have been altered, and the odds against the British immeasurably enhanced. Another fortunate circumstance was that the portion of the Province, through which the route to Delhi lay, was held by Chieftains who owed their escape from absorption by Ranjít Singh to a British Protectorate, and who showed their gratitude by loyal co-operation at a moment when the fortunes of the British seemed at the lowest. The Chief of Patiála lent an army to preserve our communications; and

the troops of the Jind Rájá fought by the side of British soldiers in the breach at Delhi. Fortunate, too, was it that the head official of the Province was a man whose character, temperament and antecedents seemed as though expressly designed to meet a great emergency. Sir John Lawrence had been familiar with Delhi since his first appointment, as a young civilian, twenty-five years before. In 1845 he was its Chief Magistrate, and earned Lord Hardinge's approval by the excellence of his transport arrangements to the battlefield of Sobráon. He had been placed in command of the territory then acquired. On various occasions he had been officially connected with districts on either side of Delhi, and knew them and the people thoroughly. Such knowledge is strength. When the moment arrived he was able to turn it to invaluable account. His colleagues and subordinates formed the strongest body of officials ever concentrated on an Indian Province. Among them were several whose military capacity amounted to absolute genius.

Westward, across the Indus, the wild tribes of the Suláimán hovered on the frontier, ever ready for a fray; and, beyond them, again, was old Dost Muhammad in his Kábul fortress, eagerly watching the course of events and the chances of safety for his little State, dangerously environed by mightier Powers, whose collision might crush it out of existence. Experience had taught him some rude lessons. The British had grievously wronged him —had driven him from a throne into exile and

captivity. He had revenged himself, after his restoration, by sending his best troops to aid the Sikhs in their struggle for independence. He had now made up his mind that the British were better as friends than foes. The wrongs, which he had received—the assistance which he had given our enemies had been mutually condoned, and a formal agreement of amity had been signed in 1855. In Lord Canning's first year the course of events had tended to strengthen the ties of friendship between the English Government and the Amír. Persia was once again threatening Herát; war with Persia was imminent. There was, fortunately, at this time, an official at Pesháwar who appreciated the importance of the Amír's alliance, and believed that he might be conciliated and trusted. Herbert Edwardes succeeded in convincing Lord Canning that we might with advantage settle the terms on which England would help him in his struggle with the common enemy. The old Chieftain came down to the Kháiber, discussed his resources and necessities with the British envoys, renewed the alliance and received a satisfactory assurance of material aid. 'Now,' he said, 'I have made a treaty with the British, and I will keep it till death'—a promise which, happily for England, he observed with exemplary fidelity at a crisis when its breach would have been disastrous.

But there were dangers nearer home. The great south-easterly bend of the Jumna marked a frontier which seemed boldly to challenge the sturdy tribes of

Rájputána. Delhi, Agra and Allahábád looked out upon a region where, on an arid soil and beneath a blazing sky, some of the fiercest blood in India throbbed in the veins of a warrior race. Southward from Agra towered the rock-built stronghold of Gwalior, where Sindhia recalled the faded glories of Maráthá rule. To the south, again, was Jhánsí, home of a brave and fierce woman, widow of the last of the Jhánsí Rájás, bitterly brooding over Lord Dalhousie's refusal to allow her to adopt an heir to the title and dignities of her departed lord. Still further to the south—where the Vindhyan Hills look down upon the Valley of the Narbadá—Holkar, another Maráthá potentate, preserved a loyalty which, perhaps, at times derived opportune reinforcement from the neighbourhood of a British cantonment at Mhow. Through this region ran the great high-road from Bombay to Agra and Delhi; and, in case of a disturbance in Upper India, its military significance would be enormous.

The Maráthá Princes had no great reason to love the British. Nowhere had national instincts been more rudely thwarted, or the struggle between anarchy, rapine and oppression, as represented by native rulers, and order and subordination, as enforced by English administrators, been more acute. The antagonism had been long, fierce, inveterate. In the latter half of the seventeenth century Sivají, founder of the Maráthás, had carved a kingdom for himself out of a dismembered fragment of the Mughal Empire. His successors had

pillaged with indiscriminate ruthlessness north and south of the Narbadá—in the Gangetic valley and in the uplands of the Deccan. His descendants reigned at Sátára, far to the south; but a race of hereditary ministers had eclipsed the lineal heads of the confederacy, and the Peshwás at Poona had won their way to an acknowledged headship. Another powerful subordinate had started an independent princedom in Berár, with Nágpur for his capital; another became a Sovereign at Baroda; Sindhia gathered his retainers at Gwalior; Holkar at Indore. Far and wide, across India, from Gujarát to Cuttack—from the Jumna to the Karnátic—these fierce communities had made the thunder of the Maráthá horsemen a sound of terror. At the beginning of the century their mutual animosities brought a nobler combatant upon the scene, and Arthur Wellesley had crushed a Maráthá army at Assaye. Other victories made the English masters of Delhi, Agra, and a wide tract of country north of the Jumna. The Province of Orissa was taken from the Maráthá Chieftain of Nágpur. Holkar still held his ground, and Lord Wellesley's closing years were chequered by inglorious reverses and baffled schemes. Lord Cornwallis arrived in 1805 with a mission of peace; but the day of peace was not yet dawning. Twelve years later Lord Hastings found himself committed to another Maráthá War. The Peshwá struck a bold blow for his ascendancy—bold, but ineffectual. He was vanquished, lost his kingdom and his Maráthá headship, and retired, a pensioner

of his conquerors, to Bithúr, an estate in the neighbourhood of Cawnpur, where his adopted son, forty years later, was destined to take a terrible revenge for his father's reverses. The Berár Sovereign tempted his fate with a like result. His kingdom was shattered and dismembered. Holkar received a crushing blow at Mehidpur. The Maráthá States bent their stubborn neck beneath the yoke, and owned themselves feudatories of the conquering Power. Such a history leaves no kindly recollections; nor had subsequent intercourse tended to induce a more friendly mood. Southward of Bombay, behind the Western Gháts, lay a tract, known as the South Maráthá Country, reaching from Sátára to Dhárwár. Here there was at work a special cause of animosity, the proceedings of a Commission, whose function it was to inquire, with the exactness of an English Court, into the validity of various titles and privileges purporting to emanate from former dynasties. The holder of a title, which has served well enough for his fathers before him, naturally resents official intrusion into his muniment room. The 'Inam Commission' and its agents were odious, especially to those whom their proceedings ruined. There was, moreover, one Maráthá, whose hatred toward the English was tinged with a deep personal animosity. The last of the Peshwás had lived on at Bithúr till 1851. His adopted son, known to infamy as Náná Sáhib, petitioned to have the ex-Peshwá's life-pension continued to himself. The claim had no legal basis, and Lord Dalhousie con-

sidered that the claimant, who inherited a large sum from his adoptive father's savings, was generously treated in being constituted owner of the Bithúr Estate. The Náná sent an envoy to move the English authorities in his behalf; but the Directors were as immoveable as Dalhousie. He nursed his grievance. Shortly before the outbreak of the Mutiny, he made a tour in Upper India, and paid a visit to Lucknow, which so unfavourably impressed Sir H. Lawrence that he wrote to communicate his suspicions to the General commanding at Cawnpur—a warning, which, unhappily, was not believed till tragic experience confirmed its truth.

There were other considerations, of wider range and stronger import even than nationality, which at this time influenced the public mind in India. One was religious disquietude. The pious conservative has generally ample grounds for deploring his lot as born in evil days and a revolutionary epoch. But the classes who, in the India of Lord Dalhousie, wished to stand in the old ways of custom and creed, may well have felt something like consternation at changes which threatened the whole structure of society and struck at the very heart of religion. Creed and custom and institution seemed to be tottering to their fall. Popular education, a prominent feature of Dalhousie's programme, had been inaugurated by a brilliant essay, in which Macaulay assumed as his standpoint the thesis that Hindu mythology was a mere tissue of absurdities.

With cheerful but ruthless lucidity he pointed out that the first lesson in physics must satisfy the Bengalí student that his sacred cosmogony was a childish myth. The hopes of missionaries rose high. Their language was confident and courageous. Some of their manifestoes sounded like invitations to general apostacy. Their influence on legislation was unmistakeable. The Hindu system visits apostacy with tremendous penalties, and declares the renegade to have forfeited, not merely the social communion of his fellow-men, but his share of the inheritance. An Act of the Governor-General's Council had swept away these penalties, and allowed the deserter from his creed to share with believers in the property and privileges of the family estate. A strong sentiment, embodied in a sacred text and a widely-spread custom, prohibited the Hindu widow from a second marriage. A British enactment—declaring that this was not the Hindu law, and that the widow was free to marry again—had been prepared in Lord Dalhousie's time, and was passed by his successor. Another measure of the legislature, promoted in the early days of Lord Canning's reign, under the patronage of influential members of the Government, for the purpose of restraining certain odious forms of polygamy, was resented by Bráhmans, whose privileges it curtailed, and dreaded by Hindu conservatives, who saw in it only another blow at existing institutions. When the legislature was thus courageous, it was not likely that the zeal of indi-

viduals would be checked by authority or tempered by discretion. There were many in India at this time, not mere fanatics or enthusiasts, who regarded the conversion of the people of India as a not improbable event, and the endeavour to promote it as a duty, which no human mandate could overrule. One officer had openly preached to the soldiers of his regiment at Barrackpur: another had inscribed the Lord's Prayer on pillars on the main road entering the capital of his district.

It is significant that, on so important an occasion as the banquet given by the Directors of the East India Company to Lord Canning on his appointment as Governor-General, Lord Palmerston had used language, which alarmists in India might not unreasonably interpret as suggestive that the conversion of the people was among the hopes, if not the immediate projects, of the Government. 'Perhaps,' he said, 'it might be our lot to confer on the countless millions of India a higher and nobler gift than any mere human knowledge; but that must be left to the hands of Time and the gradual improvement of the people.'

The hands of Time seemed moving very quick; the pace was becoming dangerous. 'The faster the current glides,' wrote Sir H. Lawrence in 1856, 'the more need of caution, of watching the weather, the rocks and shoals.' Even while he wrote, the breakers were close a-head. What—millions of anxious hearts were asking—did all these changes portend to the social and religious ascendancy of the Bráhman, to his prestige,

his sanctity, his caste? There was fear in the high quarters of Bráhmanism, and Bráhmans were a ruling power in the Sepoy army.

The Musalmán had a personal grievance. He was feeling the dull pain of humiliated authority and tarnished prestige. In the days of the great Mughal Emperors the Muhammadan rule had stretched far and wide. Eastward and southward—across the rich delta of Bengal, the rice fields of Dacca, the fat homesteads of Arcot, Muhammadan rulers had exercised sway, and Muhammadan soldiers and officials had enjoyed the pleasant privileges of victorious rule. Those halcyon days had passed. The Muhammadan had now to compete on equal terms with the race which he had conquered and despised.

His temperament, his creed, his education, disabled him from contending successfully with the subtle and quick-witted Hindu. The present was distressful. He brooded gloomily over the past. His lawful Sovereign sat with his sham Court at Delhi, more prisoner than prince—a pale shade of his former greatness. He was humbled. His conquerors were now devising fresh humiliations for his son. Haidarábád and Lucknow alone remained of the mighty kingdoms which derived their sovereignty from Delhi; and now the suppression of the Lucknow Court once again sounded in the Musalmán's ears the knell of departing glory. In his dreams of the future, the fall of the British rule presented itself to the eye of faith as opening a possibility of restoration. The Musalmán's

acquiescence in an infidel ruler is always contingent on the impossibility of rebellion. If a favourable opportunity offered, it would not be for pious believers to let it pass unused. A stimulus was afforded to disloyalty by a colony of fanatics from India, who had established themselves at Sitana, in the mountain ranges beyond the Indus, with the alliance of a local ruler, the Akhond of Swát. They issued incendiary proclamations, while the Múlvies of Patná secretly co-operated, and kept up a train of political converts from that city to the British frontier.

Apart from race or religion there were large classes in India on whom the British rule weighed heavily, or who had old scores to settle with the new régime, or who were sufficiently uneasy to wish for change. There were other great landholders besides those of Oudh, who had experienced a rude transition, and come out of it with lessened dignities and a lighter purse. Lord Dalhousie's Government had rigorously enforced the principle that the right of an Indian Prince to transmit sovereignty to his adopted heir was contingent on the permission of the paramount Power. That permission had been on several notable occasions refused. The princely families of India could not fail to recognise that, as failure of natural heirs is a continual incident in an Eastern magnate's family, their absorption in the Empire was, sooner or later, inevitable.

Such feelings in high quarters may have tended to unsettlement, and in any case have weakened the

dislike of change natural to a privileged class. So, too, there were men to whom the introduction of a regular judicial system and strict procedure had proved a capital misfortune. Immemorial estates pass away to successful decree-holders, and a time-honoured family is sunk in ruin. To such men the hour of revolution sounds a hopeful note. There were, no doubt, men in such a mood in 1857, who reflected that the Centenary of Plassey was at hand, and recalled with secret satisfaction the prophecy that the hundredth year of British rule was to see its close.

CHAPTER IV

The Native Army

The native army, with which Lord Canning had to deal, had been winning its laurels for a century. The French and English, ranging themselves on opposite sides in the War of the Austrian Succession, had carried their quarrel to the Coromandel Coast, and had soon learnt the valuable secret that native troops, disciplined and led by European officers, might be effectively employed against a native or a European foe. The English had turned the discovery to good account, and, when Clive started to rescue Calcutta from Siráj-ud-daulá and to win his great victory at Plassey, he led with him, besides his 900 English soldiers, a well-drilled force of 1200 Sepoys. Since then the Sepoy army had shown its mettle on a hundred well-fought fields. It had carried the standards of England to victory against the greatest armies and most famous commanders of the East—before the ramparts of Seringapatam, in the forest swamps of Burma, on the banks of the Sutlej, in the burning plains of Sind. It had enabled Wellesley to crush the Maráthás at Assaye, and Gough to shatter the Sikh battalions at Gujarat. It had

shared our reverses as well as our triumphs. Native soldiers had suffered and died by the side of their English comrades on the banks of the Chambal, in the defiles of Kábul, and behind the crumbling earthworks of Jalálábád.

The English leaders of this force, in its earlier days, appear to have wielded a strange spell over their followers. Romantic stories are told of the devotion with which the native soldier regarded his European officer, and the chivalrous loyalty with which he obeyed him. On one occasion the Sepoys had stood by Clive against a mutiny of English officers and troops. On another they had, when food was running short, given up their own rations in order that the Europeans of the garrison, less inured than themselves to privation, might not feel the pinch of hunger.

An honourable record of meritorious service had embodied itself in the tradition that the Sepoy, if properly led, would go anywhere and do anything that his officer enjoined. The officers, on the other hand, were proud of their men, careful of their well-being, confident in their loyalty—a confidence, which, in many instances, was not to be shaken by the clearest evidence, and which cost many lives by the delay of precautions till it was too late to strike a blow. Some signal instances, however, had proved that the Sepoy was capable of a mutinous mood. At Vellore, in 1806, discontent—aroused by certain innovations in drill and dress, which were regarded as

a menace to caste and religion, and aided, probably, by Tipú Sáhib's family, who were detained there—had shown itself in overt insubordination. In a few hours Gillespie's dragoons, galloping from Arcot, had brought the offenders to account, and military order had been vindicated by a sudden and terrible retribution.

Eighteen years later, on the occasion of the first Burmese War, a native regiment, the 47th, alarmed lest the vicissitudes of the journey to Burma might imperil the integrity of the terms of their engagement, refused to march. Discipline was again sternly asserted. A sudden discharge of artillery swept the ranks of the offenders; the surviving leaders were hanged, and the name of the guilty regiment disappeared from the Army List.

Subsequent events had not tended to improve the temper of the Sepoy, or diminish the grounds of disaffection. The conquests of Wellesley, Hastings, and Dalhousie had enlarged the area in which the Sepoy was bound to serve without the extra allowance granted for foreign service. The victories, which the Sepoy helped to win, were thus turned to his disadvantage. The ill-feeling had on more occasions than one assumed a dangerous form. The 34th Regiment, ordered to Sind, had refused to march beyond Firozpur without the usual addition to its pay. Several other regiments had followed the example. The Government was afraid or unable to strike the necessary blow; and though the 34th

Regiment was ultimately struck out of the Army List, the Sepoy had learned the mischievous lesson that insubordination might enjoy impunity and even effect its object.

The conquest of the Punjab once more raised the question of the extra allowance for foreign service. In 1849 two regiments of the Army of Occupation showed overt signs of discontent. A soldier of nerve and resolution was, happily, on the spot to meet the emergency. Sir Colin Campbell's mood was not encouraging to incipient mutineers, and the difficulty, for the moment, passed away.

In December of the same year General Hearsey, an officer destined a few years later to play a prominent part in the opening scene of the Mutiny, found himself confronted by a similar manifestation. In January of 1850 the 66th N.I. broke out at Govindgarh, the fort which dominated Amritsar, the sacred city of the Sikhs. The outbreak was promptly crushed by some native Cavalry which, luckily, stood firm. The guilty regiment was disbanded: its name was erased from the Army List, and its place taken by a regiment of Gúrkha Hill-men, whose military value was now beginning to be realised.

At this stage of the story a conflict of opinion between the Governor-General and the Commander-in-Chief tended to obscure the merits of the controversy, and to impede the application of remedial measures. Neither Lord Dalhousie nor Sir Charles Napier were men to sleep upon their rights. Napier, in a more

than usually independent mood, thought proper to rescind a departmental order, which had been passed in 1845 as to some details of the Sepoys' pay, and to denounce it as 'impolitic and unjust.' Dalhousie at once responded to the challenge, and in incisive language reproved the attempted encroachment on his authority. Napier, angry and rhetorical, declared that he had acted in 'a moment of great public danger,' and that he was dealing with 'an army of 40,000 men, infected with a mutinous spirit.' Dalhousie denied the mutinous spirit and derided the alleged danger. The result was to commit Dalhousie to the theory that the condition of the native army was satisfactory. He received, however, some serious warnings as to the soundness of such a view. Once again Burma supplied the occasion. In the second Burma War the 38th N. I., a distinguished regiment, was invited to embark for Arakan. Such a journey was beyond the terms of its engagement. It would imperil caste. The men declined to go. Dalhousie was unable to compel them. They were in their right. The Great Lord Sáhib was known, in soldiers' circles, to have suffered a repulse. Such triumphs are dangerous to those who win them. The Sepoy was tasting the pleasure of having his own way, and was learning how to get it. The difficulty was one of the troublesome legacies which Dalhousie bequeathed to his successor. When Lord Canning arrived in India, it had become acute. The conquest of Pegu necessitated a permanent Burma

garrison; but only a twelfth part of the Bengal Army was available for foreign service. The rest could refuse to cross the sea. The land journey to Burma was practically impossible. The problem pressed for solution. Of the six regiments available for general service, three were in Pegu, and would have shortly to be relieved: the other three had but recently returned, and could not be again called upon for such unwelcome employment. Lord Canning appealed for help to the Madras Government, whose army did not, by the terms of enlistment, enjoy the exemption from service across the sea. But the Madras Government objected that the general employment of its troops as a garrison for Burma would render the army unpopular, check enlistment, and impair the morale and discipline of the force. Thus foiled, Lord Canning resolved that the only course was to act in the direction which had, several years before, been indicated by the Directors—to assimilate the terms of enlistment for the whole Bengal Army to those in force in the Bombay and Madras Armies and in the six 'General Service' regiments of Bengal. It was decreed, accordingly, that, for the future, the terms of recruitment for the whole of the Bengal army would involve the obligation of service beyond the sea. The announcement produced no manifestation of disapproval, and Lord Canning wrote home in the autumn of 1856 that there was no symptom that the change was unpopular, or that the Sepoys, enlisted on the old terms, regarded it as a first step towards

breaking faith with themselves. There is reason, however, to believe that the measure was unfavourably regarded by the Bengal Army and the classes from which it was recruited. That army was, to a large extent, a hereditary body. The existing Sepoys regarded the future position of their sons with as much anxiety as their own. Sir Henry Lawrence, writing early in May, 1857, reported that the enlistment oath 'for general service' was frightening the Sepoys and deterring the Rájput recruits. It is possible that this, among other topics, was urged on the Sepoys by the propagandists of disaffection as a ground for the belief that their privileges, caste and religion were not as secure as heretofore. The uneasiness of the native army may have been increased by the rumour that the Government contemplated a large addition to the Sikh troops in their employ, and would thus become, to some degree, independent of the army, by which hitherto its Empire had been extended and sustained.

A source of chronic danger existed in the personnel of the Bengal Army. It was mainly recruited from districts in Oudh, in which Bráhmans and Rájputs form the bulk of the fighting population. The men were of fine, stalwart physique, such as a commanding officer naturally selects as promising material. The orders of Government, accordingly, which had from time to time enjoined the necessity of composing regiments of diverse castes and classes, had been too generally overlooked. The son stepped proudly and

gladly into the father's place, and found himself surrounded by kinsmen. The result was that two-thirds of the Bengal Army, and of the 'Contingent Forces' maintained by Holkar, Sindhia and other semi-independent States, consisted of men drawn from the same locality, inspired with the same ideas, and bound together by strong ties of creed, custom, and feeling. In one of the regiments near Calcutta, in which in 1857 disaffection first disclosed itself, it was ascertained that, out of a total of 1083 men, more than 800 were Hindus, and of these no less than 335, including 41 officers, were Bráhmans. An army so composed could scarcely fail to engender forces subversive of its discipline as a military machine, and calculated to give to the sentiments of any influential section the dangerous universality of an epidemic. The seriousness of such a state of things was enhanced by the fact that the Bengal Army garrisoned a territory which stretched from the Trans-Indus frontier on the west to Pegu and the Malay Peninsula on the east, and that it outnumbered the combined numbers of the other two Presidential armies. In 1856 it consisted of seventy-four regiments of Infantry, ten regiments of regular, and eighteen of irregular Cavalry. Part of the Bombay Army, also, was recruited from the same districts in Oudh, and shared the susceptibilities of their fellow-tribesmen in Bengal.

It is possible, also, that the annexation of Oudh may have fostered disaffection in the native soldiery, largely recruited from that country. Some, no doubt,

felt aggrieved at the extinction of a dynasty, which, whatever its offences, had the merit of making Oudh a kingdom. When the order of effacement came, the shortcomings of the deposed Sovereign—his debased surroundings—the outrages of his officials—the reign of cruelty, impotence, and wrong—passed, no doubt, into a generous oblivion. A soldier, whom oppression scarcely touched and certainly did not shock, would feel but languid enthusiasm for the new and impersonal régime, which replaced the picturesque splendours of an Oriental Court by the dull preciseness of English administration; and which lowered his personal status by bringing within the reach of the community at large legal rights which had previously been the privilege of the soldiery.

In the army itself there was a serious deficiency of European officers. Lord Dalhousie's administrative system necessitated the free employment of European officers for civil work. A semi-military, semi-civil régime answered the wants of a newly-conquered Province. It was cheap; it was effective; it rendered the head of the organisation more completely master of the situation—to do what he pleased, unchecked by technicalities. But it involved a large reduction in the staff of European officers doing duty with their regiments. In April, 1857, Lord Canning had written to England an urgent request for an addition to the officers in each Infantry regiment—four for each European, two for each native regiment. He explained that the application was submitted in a

bald shape because 'the necessity of immediate increase is urgent, and I have no time to go into the complicated question of our military wants generally.' An influential party in England, however, deprecated any such addition in native regiments as tending to lead the officers to form a class apart, and to live a too completely European life, and so to lose touch of their troops.

Administrative changes, moreover, introduced with the object of improved discipline and efficiency, had lowered the status of the officers in native regiments, and had substituted for a small body of European officers, specially adapted to their work and closely associated with their men, the conventional staff of an English regiment. A system of appeal to Head-quarters had grown up, which taught the Sepoy the dangerous lesson that his officer's decision was liable to be revised and set aside.

Altogether it may be said that many causes had tended to undermine the Sepoy's respect for authority, his loyalty to his officers, his sense of discipline, and to accustom him to the idea of carrying his own way against his superior. All these bad influences are more or less conjectural; but there was one evil, affecting the native soldiers before the Mutiny, which admitted of arithmetical demonstration. There were too many of them.

In 1838, when the Afghán War broke out, the native army was under 154,000 men. Lord Hardinge's preparations to meet the Sikhs had raised the numbers

to 245,000. At the close of Dalhousie's reign, the numbers were still 233,000. On the other hand, the European force had been gradually lowered from 48,709 men in 1852 to 45,322 at the moment of Lord Canning's arrival. He found, accordingly, an approximate ratio of one European to five native soldiers. In the Artillery there were more than 12,000 native Gunners, as compared with 6500 Europeans. The European force was very unequally distributed, a preponderating number being employed in garrisoning newly-acquired territories, the Punjab, Sind and Oudh. Twenty years before there had been no less than six European regiments between Calcutta and Allahábád. In Dalhousie's time there were only two, and when the Mutiny broke out, Lord Canning found that, for the 750 miles between Barrackpur and Agra, there was only a single European regiment, stationed about half-way, at Dinápur.

This numerical disproportion had occasioned anxiety to Lord Dalhousie, and he had brought the subject strongly before the Home Government. In 1853, Parliament had sanctioned an increase of the European local force from 12,000 to 20,000 men. Unfortunately, advantage had been taken of this permission only to the extent of an addition of three regiments. Under the pressure of the Crimean War, two European regiments from the Indian garrison had been demanded, a request which provoked a vehement protest from the Governor-General. Such a transfer would,

he objected, give rise to an impression that in our conflict with Russia we had grappled with too powerful an antagonist: it would reduce the European force below the standard recognised as safe in ordinary times. 'If, further,' he added, 'we should be called to despatch an army to the Persian Gulf . . . then indeed I shall no longer feel, and can no longer express, the same confidence as before that the security and stability of our position in the East will remain unassailed.'

Despite this protest, two European regiments were transferred in 1854. They were never replaced; and when the Mutiny broke out, another important fraction of the European force was engaged in the Persian expedition.

One of Dalhousie's last acts in India had been to lay on his Council table a series of Minutes, the general purport of which was a reduction of Sepoy regiments, an increase of European regiments, an addition to the Irregular and Gúrkha forces, and of the European officers with native regiments. The warning fell on unheeding ears: the Minutes were pigeon-holed, and never reached Parliament or the English public. Some of them were irretrievably mislaid. The subject dropped out of notice; and the outbreak of 1857 found the Government with an European force wholly inadequate to meet the barest requirements of the situation.

Dalhousie's protest did not stand alone. Sir Henry Lawrence in 1855 had written in no faltering terms of

the defects which at that time impaired the efficiency of the native army. He called attention to the dangerous numerical disproportion of the native to the European force. He insisted on the danger of high military commands being entrusted to men whose only claim rested on seniority, and whose incompetence was, in many instances, notorious—on the 'sullen discontent' which the existing rules excited in aspiring native soldiers—the inadequate pay—the scanty and long-deferred pension, the narrow possibilities which bounded the ambition of 'the man who lives and rots without hope.' He pointed out how 50,000 soldiers of the King of Oudh, turned adrift for no fault of their own, and an equal number of his dependents, were all looking to the British Government for compensation—and how Oudh, with its 246 forts and innumerable smaller strongholds, hidden in impenetrable jungles, afforded a congenial refuge for despair and disloyalty. 'We shall be unwise,' he said, 'to wait for the occasion. Come it will, unless anticipated.' The Sibylline leaves were scattered to the winds, and even while he wrote, the hours, during which anticipation would be possible, were passing rapidly away.

CHAPTER V

MUTINY

THERE are periods in history, it has been said, which resemble the moments before the rising of the curtain on a stage where some thrilling drama is about to be enacted. We seem to hear the muttered voices, the hurried steps, the bustle of preparation on the still hidden scene. There is a nervous excitement—a sense of impending catastrophe: the common acts of life gain a strange, terrifying significance: common words mean more than meets the ear. The heroes, the victims, the villains of the piece, have not begun their parts: but the thrill of expectation is strong; tragedy already fills the air.

It is with some such feeling as this that we watch the close of Lord Canning's first year in India, and the fateful 1857, with its store of troubles, opening upon a world where all things still promised to run their common course.

And now the first whiff of the coming tempest broke upon an untroubled atmosphere. It had been decided that the old-fashioned musket should be superseded by the Enfield rifle. Depôts for instruction in the use of the new weapon had been

formed at three stations: Dumdum, a cantonment in the neighbourhood of Calcutta; Ambála and Siálkot, at the foot of the Himálaya in Upper India. Large numbers of cartridges for the new rifle had been manufactured at Fort William in Calcutta, and sent up country for use at the two northern depôts. Another supply had been manufactured at Meerut, the headquarters of the Bengal Artillery. None had, however, as yet been issued to the troops. A chance altercation between a high-caste Sepoy and a low-caste employé at Dumdum brought to light the astounding fact that the material used in lubricating the new cartridge consisted partially of the fat of cows and pigs, a substance which neither Hindu nor Muhammadan could touch without pollution. The story spread like wild-fire. It became at once the topic of the Sepoys' talk at the neighbouring cantonment of Barrackpur, where four native regiments were quartered. The Sepoys were seriously alarmed; and the Sepoys were a body so constituted that a sentiment, felt acutely by any of its members, flashed through the entire body with the swiftness and force of an electric shock. There is reason to believe that, before Lord Canning's day, the native soldiers of Upper India were haunted by the idea that the Government contemplated their conversion to Christianity by the summary process of rendering them outcasts from their own religion. In the first days of trouble at Lucknow a Bráhman officer of high standing assured Sir H. Lawrence that for ten years

the Government had entertained such a design, and, when Sir Henry reasoned with him, stuck to his opinion, saying, 'I tell you what everybody says.' Such an idea would not seem grotesque to men whose notions of religion rested more on customary ceremonial than on sentiment or dogma, and with whom acceptance by the vanquished of the creed of the conqueror was a not unfamiliar incident of conquest. It now received a tremendous impetus from the discovery that the Government was about to furnish the soldier, as part of his equipment, with something which Hindu and Muhammadan alike regarded it as sacrilege to touch. Their rulers were contriving, had actually contrived, their religious and social ruin. Whenever, from Calcutta to Peshâwar, a group of Sepoys gathered round a camp fire to eat their meal, or chatted on the march, the tidings found ready belief; and, owing to the close ties between the Bengal army and the Oudh population, every pang which the Sepoy felt vibrated through a hundred villages, where the fate of father or husband or brother was keenly felt and eagerly discussed. Such anxieties soon mount into panic, and early in 1857 the Sepoy army of Bengal was panic-stricken.

At Barrackpur there was an outburst of incendiarism in the native quarters—midnight meetings—excited talk—despatching of letters to other regiments—every symptom of alarm and agitation. A hundred miles to the north the cantonment of Berhampur kept guard over Murshidâbâd, a former capital of Bengal,

and now the home of one of India's discrowned magnates. There were no European troops. An Infantry regiment—the 19th,—a corps of irregular Cavalry and a battery of Artillery, composed the native force. Here, before the close of February, the excitement became acute. The 19th broke into open mutiny. The men refused the copper caps tendered to them for a parade, and presently rushed to their arms. The Colonel, after vainly endeavouring to persuade or intimidate them into submission, and not too confident of the support of the rest of the force, was compelled to purchase their return to discipline by a concession which was equivalent to surrender to a mutinous demonstration.

At Calcutta, meanwhile, prompt measures had been taken to allay the excitement. An order was promulgated, informing the troops at Barrackpur that they would be allowed to purchase for themselves the ingredients for greasing their cartridges. General Hearsey, the General of the Division, an officer thoroughly familiar with native feeling, addressed the brigade and explained to the troops the futility of their alarms. His explanations fell on unbelieving ears. The fact that the Government had sent to Burma for an English regiment, and that the regiment which had misbehaved at Murshidábád was under orders to come down to headquarters to receive sentence for its offence, increased the general alarm.

The suspicion, originally felt about the grease used

for lubricating the new cartridge, was now transferred to the glazed paper of which it was made. It was in vain that its innocence was demonstrated. Terror will not be convinced. At the close of March, a more pronounced outburst of insubordination occurred at Barrackpur. In front of the Quarter Guard of the 34th N. I., one of the native regiments there stationed, a young Sepoy, in a frenzy of excitement, strode boldly up and down, inviting his companions to rebellion. He fired upon an European officer, as he was galloping to the scene of disorder, brought down his horse, and grappled with him on the ground. In the scuffle which ensued, no native, except a single Muhammadan, came to the assistance of their officer. The native officer of the Quarter Guard and his men looked on unmoved. Some of them even joined in the assault. The arrival on the scene of the General of the Division and his daring and impressive behaviour restored discipline for the moment. But it was evident that the regiment was completely demoralised, and that further troubles might be expected. The disbanding of the 19th N. I. was, however, effected without disturbance. The dismissed soldiers went away, cheering their General, protesting contrition, and vowing vengeance against the 34th Regiment as the instigators of their misbehaviour.

Meanwhile, at Ambála, 1000 miles away, an incident had occurred in the Commander-in-Chief's camp which showed how widely the alarm about the new

cartridges had spread. The 36th Regiment, which formed General Anson's escort on his march, had a detachment in the rifle depôt. Two Sepoys from this detachment visited the General's camp, and learned with horror that their comrades regarded them as Christians and outcasts, and refused to eat with them. The men reported the incident to Lieutenant Martineau, the Musketry Instructor at the depôt, with tears in their eyes. If this, they argued, could occur in the Commander-in-Chief's camp, what would be their fate when they returned to their homes? They were ruined.

Then the Commander-in-Chief attempted to allay their anxiety. Summoning the native officers before him, he assured them that the Government harboured no design against their caste, and that their fears were baseless. The native officers, respectful, but unconvinced, pointed out in reply that, however groundless it might be, the story was universally believed in the country, and that, though they were ready to obey any order to use the new cartridge, its use would render them outcasts. General Anson then raised the question, whether it might not be well to meet an irrational panic by the simple expedient of breaking up the depôt and dispersing the detachments to their regiments. Upon consideration, however, Lord Canning decided that it would be a mistake to postpone the target drill. On no possible ground could objection to the cartridge paper be justified. 'If we give way upon this,' he wrote, 'I do not see

where we can take our stand.' The difficulty in the future would be only increased by delay. The new drill, accordingly, was ordered to proceed. The Sepoys submitted; but nightly fires in the cantonments indicated the prevalence of disturbing influences and an agitated mood in the soldiery. Night after night some military building was found to have been mysteriously fired. All attempts to discover the origin of the conflagration were unsuccessful.

The tide of trouble continued to rise. One alarming rumour followed another. At Cawnpur, where grain prices happened to be ruling high, some consignments of flour, forwarded in Government boats, were offered to the troops. The proffered boon was refused, and the sale was at once arrested by the report that the grain had been ground in European mills, and that the dust of cow bones had been mixed with it for the purpose of polluting it. Not a Sepoy would touch the suspected supply. In the surrounding country the general uneasiness was enhanced by the mysterious transmission, from village to village, of chupattis—flat cakes of flour—the meaning of which has never been elucidated, but which were admitted on all hands to herald the advent of stirring times. At Meerut, a religious mendicant, mounted on an elephant and followed by a long retinue, riding through the streets of the city, stimulated the public excitement. Náná Sáhib, the adopted son of the ex-Peshwá, whose estate of Bithúr was but a few miles from Lucknow, was travelling from city to city, and early in 1857 paid

visits to Delhi, Lucknow, Kálpi across the Jumna, and other important centres of native society. In the last week of April the latent fire blazed out. Out of ninety troopers of the 3rd Native Cavalry at Meerut, who were called upon to receive their cartridges for a parade, all but five refused to touch them. In vain their Colonel expostulated, upbraided, explained The men were firm. The parade was broken up, a court-martial ordered, the due complement of officers—all natives—was assembled to investigate this flagrant breach of discipline.

At Calcutta it appeared as if the excitement was subsiding. There had been no more outbreaks at Barrackpur. The mutinous Sepoy of the 34th N.I. and the native officer of the Quarter Guard had been hanged in presence of all the troops of the cantonment, the latter with his last breath confessing his guilt and warning his comrades against disloyal behaviour. So satisfied was General Hearsey with the state of the cantonment that, on May 7th, he reported that he no longer required the European troops, which had been sent there to guard against disturbance; and the Government were preparing to send back the 84th Regiment, which, on the first occurrence of disturbance, had been brought over from Burma.

At Dumdum the detachment in the rifle depôt had proceeded to ball practice without any symptoms of disaffection. At Siálkot the new rifle drill was proceeding quietly. Sir J. Lawrence, who visited

that station in May for the purpose of seeing the new weapon, as well as of judging of the temper of the Sepoys, reported to Lord Canning that 'all were highly pleased with the new musket and quite ready to adopt it;' 'The officers assured him that no bad feeling had been shown, and he could perceive no hesitation or reluctance on the part of the Sepoys.' From Ambála General Barnard wrote in favourable terms of the behaviour of the troops. It thus seemed that at the central points, the rifle depôts, the difficulty had been tided over. At Meerut, the insubordination of the 3rd Cavalry provoked no imitators. The threatening storm seemed to have passed, and Lord Canning began to turn his thoughts to current topics of administration. Presently came bad news from Lucknow. Early in May a regiment of Oudh Irregular Cavalry had shown symptoms of disaffection. The men refused to use the cartridges, and had broken into open mutiny. Sir H. Lawrence had at once adopted vigorous measures of repression, and, hurrying to the spot, had succeeded in disarming the regiment. Symptoms of disturbance, however, continued. Incendiarism was rife in the native quarters, and Sir H. Lawrence satisfied himself, by personal intercourse with the men, that the moving cause of the disturbance was the conviction of the native soldiery that the English Government contemplated their compulsory conversion.

At Calcutta the punishment of the 34th Regiment had been considered with that leisurely exactness

which Lord Canning's temperament demanded, and which the importance of the matter justified. It was not till the end of April that the sentence of disbandment was announced. It was, confessedly, a mild sentence. Lord Canning's assailants are never weary of denouncing its inadequacy as one of the causes of subsequent military insubordination. But there is no ground for supposing that the careful moderation exhibited by the Government at the outburst of the Mutiny encouraged its spread. On the contrary, the first great act of rebellion was the immediate result of a severe sentence carried out, with every degrading accessory, at Meerut. Lord Canning himself, reviewing the case in the light of a subsequent outbreak at Lucknow, thus summed up the argument for a policy of leniency:—'I wish to say that it is my conviction that the measures which have been taken in dealing with mutineers *have not been too mild.* I have no doubt that many rank offenders have not had their deserts, but I know of no instance in which the punishment of any individual could, with unquestioned justice, have been made more severe: and I am not disposed to doubt the efficacy of the measures because the present ferment, in running its course over the land, after being checked in Bengal, has shown itself in Oudh and the North-West. I would meet it everywhere with the same deliberately measured punishments; picking out the leaders, wherever this is possible, for the severest penalties of military law; visiting the common herd with disbandment, but carefully exempt-

ing those whose fidelity, innocence, or, perhaps, timely repentance, is fully proved.'

The subject was still under discussion when, on May 12th, there came news from Upper India whose transcendent importance at once revolutionised the situation. The station of Meerut, some forty miles north-east of Delhi, was one of the very few in India where adequate means existed for quelling an outbreak of native troops. There was a regiment of English Dragoons, a battalion of the 60th Rifles, and a strong force of Horse and Foot Artillery, far more than sufficient to deal with the three native regiments who were also quartered in the cantonment. The court-martial on the eighty-five men of the 3rd N.C. who had refused to take their cartridges, had by this time completed its inquiry. The men were sentenced to long terms of imprisonment. The sentence was carried out with impressive solemnity. On a morning, presently to become historical—the heavens sombre with rolling clouds—the brigade assembled to hear their comrades' doom—to see them stripped of their uniform and secured with felons' manacles. The scene produced intense emotion. Resistance was impossible. There were entreaties, tears, imprecations, as the prisoners were marched away to jail. Discipline had been vindicated by a terrible example. The next day was Sunday. In the evening, as the European Riflemen were gathering for Church, a sudden movement took place in the native quarters. The Cavalry dashed off to the jail

to rescue their imprisoned companions. The two Infantry regiments, after a moment's wavering, threw in their lot with the mutineers. Then ensued a scene such as, unhappily, became too familiar in Upper India within the next few weeks. Officers were shot, houses fired, Europeans—men, women, and children, wherever found, were put to the sword. A crowd of miscreants from the jail, suddenly set free, made a long night of pillage. Meanwhile, paralysed by the sudden catastrophe, the English General of the Division and the Brigadier of the Station forebore to act, refused to let their subordinates act, and the Sepoys who had fled, a disorganised mob, in different directions, soon found themselves gathering on the march for Delhi.

In the early morning at Delhi, where courts and offices had already begun the day's work, a line of horsemen were descried galloping on the Meerut road. They found their way into the city, into the presence of the King; cut down the European officials, and, as they were gradually reinforced by the arrival of fresh companions, commenced a general massacre of the Christian population.

A brave telegraph clerk, as the mutineers burst in upon him, had just time to flash the dreadful tidings to Lahore. Before evening, the native regiments fired upon their officers and joined the mutineers. After weary hours of hope for the help from Meerut which never came, the British officers in command were compelled to recognise that the only chance of safety

lay in flight. Ere the day closed, every European who had risen that morning in Delhi, was dead, or awaiting death, or wandering about the country in the desperate endeavour to reach a place of safety.

A day dark with disaster was, however, illumined by the first of those heroic acts which will make the siege of Delhi immortal. The insurgents had their first taste of the quality of the race whose ascendancy they had elected to assail. Lieutenant Willoughby, the officer in charge of the Magazine, and eight gallant companions, resolved, early in the day, that, if they could not defend their invaluable supply of ammunition, they would destroy it, though its destruction would almost certainly involve their own. For hours they defended their stronghold against an overpowering crowd of assailants. The train was laid: the sergeant who was to fire it stood ready: Willoughby took a last look out upon the Meerut road: the assailants were swarming on the walls. The word was spoken: a vast column of flame and smoke shot upward. Two thousand of the assailants were blown into the air. The thunder of that explosion announced to the mutineers that one great object in the seizure of Delhi had escaped their grasp. Was it an opening note of victory, or the knell of an abortive insurrection?

The mutiny began badly for the English. Its first great episode was one which, least of any in its history, can be remembered with satisfaction. Englishmen for the most part, during that dread ordeal, rose nobly to the occasion; but those, whom circum-

stances called to play a leading part in this first scene, sank below the average level of promptitude, energy, and daring.

Fifty years before, an outbreak at Vellore, in the Madras Presidency—curiously similar in the character of its origin—had, fortunately, found a man equal to the occasion. In a few hours Gillespie, who commanded a regiment of British Cavalry at a neighbouring station, had come galloping to the rescue. The retribution, which his troopers dealt to the mutineers, had crushed the outbreak and taught the native army a long-remembered lesson. There was no such spirit now in the Meerut headquarters. Those, on whose firmness and promptitude salvation depended, were neither firm nor prompt. Had their example been followed—had other Englishmen, at critical moments, shown the same passivity, want of resource, the same anxiety to secure their own position to the neglect of others still more endangered, the Mutiny must have assumed a different, a far more serious aspect—our hold on Upper India must have been lost, and recovered—if indeed it proved recoverable—by a struggle the dimensions of which it is impossible to conjecture. On the other hand, a Nicholson or Havelock would have been presently thundering on the track of the mutineers, and have brought them, before they were many miles on their road, to a swift and terrible account. Order, unbroken, would have reigned in Delhi; the English would have held a fort and arsenal from which they could have defied

any combination of assailants, and the propagandists of disloyalty, from one end of India to the other, would have been cowering, in terrified silence, before the signal punishment which had overtaken the first attempt at rebellion. Not so had the book of fate been written. The history of many months of struggle, suffering and sacrifice, may be summarised as a prolonged effort to repair the disastrous consequences of this ineffable shortcoming. Nobly was it to be retrieved.

The seizure of Delhi severed the great British line of communication which runs straight across Upper India for 1500 miles from Calcutta to Peshâwar. As his eye followed it on the map, Lord Canning realised profoundly the huge distances with which he had to deal, the defencelessness of the European position, in case the movement initiated at Delhi and Meerut should spread, and the many grave possibilities which the position presented of further trouble. Delhi, the immediate scene of action, was 900 miles away. The great Province of Bengal was destitute of European troops. There were in the Province 2400 European soldiers, as against a native force of more than 29,000. A single English regiment was distributed between the fort in Calcutta and the neighbouring cantonments. A traveller, who at that time had journeyed up the line, would have found no other European troops till he reached Dinápur, 380 miles away; and the English regiment there stationed had enough to do in watching four

native regiments and the neighbouring city of Patna, itself a hotbed of Muhammadan fanaticism and a dangerous nucleus of Muhammadan intrigue. It was a portion of the line of communication at which difficulties were likely to occur, and where, in fact, the gravest perils did subsequently present themselves.

A little further to the westward our imagined traveller would have come to the holy city of Benares, the stronghold of Bráhmanism. Here were three native regiments, without a single European soldier to control them, the excitable inhabitants of the city, or the turbulent population of the surrounding country.

Next on the line of communication was Allahábád, at the junction of the Ganges and Jumna, commanding the eastern entrance of the tract of country which lies between the two rivers—known locally as the Doáb—thus dominating the North-Western Provinces, the neighbouring districts of Oudh to the north and the Rájputána frontier on the southern bend of the Jumna. Its position gave it enormous military significance; but Allahábád was without a European soldier.

At Cawnpur, on the right bank of the Ganges, 140 miles from Allahábád, the traveller would have found four native regiments, and a European force represented by fifty-nine Artillerymen, and a small party of invalids. Its defenceless condition was the more unfortunate, as there was an unusually

large non-combatant European population, including several hundreds of women and children.

At Lucknow, forty-two miles away from Cawnpur, to the north-east, on the other side of the Ganges, in the centre of the newly-annexed Province, were stationed three regiments of native Infantry, one of native Cavalry, and a battery of native Artillery. The European force consisted of a single regiment, H.M.'s 32nd Foot, about 570 strong, and 50 or 60 artillerymen.

Following the course of the Jumna from Allahábád upwards, the traveller would next come to Agra, the capital of the North-Western Provinces; here were quartered two regiments of native Infantry, one European regiment, and a battery of Artillery.

One hundred and fifteen miles higher up the stream he would have found Delhi, the head-quarters of the rebellion, with every trace of British domination swept away. Thence, forty-three miles across the Doáb, he would have found at Meerut a powerful British force—of all arms—paralysed for the moment, unhappily, by its nerveless commander. Still journeying westward, and crossing the highlands which separate the Indus and Ganges systems, the traveller would at last reach a Province where the disproportion of the European force to the native was less serious. In the Punjab there were some twelve English regiments, numbering about 11 000 men. The native regular force numbered 36,000, composed of much the same elements as the Sepoy army in other Provinces of Upper India, and

suspected of being largely infected with the same disloyal mood.

There was, besides, a local force of Punjab Irregulars, numbering some 12,000 men—distributed for 600 miles along the Indus frontier. To which side would these men incline, supposing that the Sepoys—already more than three to one—turned against the English?

Besides the army there was in the Punjab a body of 13,000 military police, drawn from the same classes as the Irregulars, and likely to follow them in the matter of loyalty. The English regiments were massed principally about Ambála on the eastern confines of the Province, and in the Pesháwar Valley, on its north-western frontier—four regiments at the one and three at the other. Even here the British were outnumbered. At Pesháwar the 3000 Europeans were confronted with 6000 native troops. The position was in other respects full of anxiety. Within an easy ride was the famous Kháibar Pass and the belt of mountain tribes, untameable, warlike, and nothing loath to seize a favourable opportunity for a raid. Beyond them again was the old Afghán Amír, who, though recently bound by an alliance of friendship with the British Government, had some old scores to settle, some deep grievances to resent, and the dear hope of regaining the Pesháwar Valley, of which Ranjít Singh had robbed him.

Nor was it of Upper India alone that Lord Canning had to think. How would the country southward of the Jumna, the races of Rájputána and Central India,

be affected by the crisis? the Maráthá Chieftains, through whose dominions ran the other great line of British communication—that which linked Agra and Bombay? Would the Gwalior army be friend or foe, and, if foe, could either line of advance be adequately protected from so well-placed an assailant, aided by such important allies as the Ráni of Jhánsí, burning to avenge her husband's wrongs? How would Holkar's retainers at Indore view the opportunity of striking a blow at their old opponent? What of Bombay, and the South Maráthá Country beyond, where elements of mischief were known to be at work? The answer was not long in coming. Within a few weeks of the seizure of Delhi, Oudh and the North-Western Provinces were practically lost. In one great station after another the Sepoys rose, drove out or massacred the Europeans, pillaged the treasury, turned loose the population of the jails, and marched away in triumph to join the rebel army. The Lieutenant-Governor of the Province was locked up in Agra, and expecting every day to be besieged. Allahábád had been saved by a lucky chance and a bold act, and was held by a hastily extemporised garrison. At Lucknow a British garrison was standing grimly at bay, surrounded by an overwhelming force of besiegers. At Cawnpur a handful of English soldiers, and a multitude of non-combatants, lay at the mercy of Náná Sáhib and the huge army that had gathered to his banner. A British force had, indeed, appeared before the walls of Delhi, but only to demonstrate

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how inadequate were its resources for the siege, and to be obliged to fight hard, day by day, to maintain its position. As week after week went by, and the Mughal capital still offered defiance to the British flag, the crisis intensified and the area of insurrection spread. The Lucknow garrison was in desperate peril: that of Cawnpur was doomed. Oudh had become an enemy's country. Rohilkhand, on the left bank of the Upper Ganges, was a-blaze. At all the great stations of the North-West Provinces—Alígarh, Etáwah, Máinpuri, Bulandshahr—there had been mutiny.

In the Punjab, where a prompt blow, struck by Montgomery at Lahore, the vigour and determination of Lawrence, and the military prowess of Nicholson, had hitherto kept the disaffection in check, the temper of the Sepoy army was dangerous.

On the 3rd of June Sir J. Lawrence wrote to Lord Canning that the whole native army was ready to break out, and that unless a blow were soon struck, the irregulars as a body would follow their example.

Nicholson and Edwardes at Pesháwar had found it necessary to disarm four native regiments there, and another at the neighbouring station of Murdan; and Nicholson sweeping about the country like the incarnation of vengeance, had struck terror into wavering hearts. In the east of the Province the fort of Phillor, an important arsenal, containing much of the siege material destined for use at Delhi, had, happily, been saved. Firozpur, too, another important arsenal, with its priceless magazine, was safe;

but the disbanded Sepoys had escaped to swell the rebel ranks at Delhi. In June the Sepoys at Jálandhar rose, effected their escape, plundering the city of Ludhiána *en route*. Múltán, an important position commanding the south-west portion of the Province and the Indus line of communication with the coast, was saved by a timely disarming of the mutinous regiments there stationed. The Sikh Chiefs, whom Nicholson invited to give assistance, declined, till it should be more apparent which would be the winning side. Soon, however, it became apparent that the general population had no sympathy with the Hindustání mutineers, and in a few weeks some 34,000 recruits were raised, delighted at the prospect of sacking Delhi.

In the first week of June, on the Jumna frontier, the Rání of Jhánsí had shown her savage mood, massacred an European force, and proclaimed herself Sovereign of her State.

The Gwalior force, sent by Sindhia to aid the British, had turned against them, and was threatening Agra. The Sepoys at Nímach and Nasírábád, garrisons in the heart of Rájputána, had broken out, pillaged the surrounding villages, and marched away to Delhi. Ajmere, the arsenal and treasury of the Province, had been saved by the timely disarming of a Bráhman regiment.

Bundelkhand, flanking the Jumna line to the south, might at any moment burst into a blaze. Still further southward the tide of disaffection rolled. At

Ságar two regiments broke out, but the 31st N. I., happily, remained staunch, and the European garrison was able to hold the Fort till its relief, seven months later, by Sir Hugh Rose. The Jabalpur district, across the Narbadá, was soon teeming with rebel Chiefs in arms. Nágpur was saved by a determined official and the staunch loyalty of the Madras troops. At Indore the British Residency had been attacked, and, despite the proximity of the cantonment at Mhow, the British Resident had been forced to beat a hasty retreat.

At Haidarábád, the Nizám's stormy capital, the shock of the Delhi news was felt; and, before June was over, there were outbreaks of Musalmán fanaticism, and cries to the Moolvie in the Great Mosque to proclaim a holy war. An attack on the Residency was repelled by the Madras Horse Artillery. Still, as the weeks went by, and Delhi remained a rebel capital, and Rohillás, Afgháns and Punjabis flocked into Haidarábád, bringing ever fresh news of English disaster, and urging participation in the struggle, the position became critical. Had the Nizám's great Minister, Sir Salar Jang, been weak, or had the loyalty of the Madras forces wavered, Southern India might presently have been in a blaze.

Westward, across the Deccan, the towns of the South Maráthá Country were dangerously sympathetic with the movement in the north. In more than one regiment, correspondence with the mutinous Sepoys was seized, and the germs of conspiracy were discovered and suppressed. At Kolhápur, before July had passed,

the Sepoys actually broke out, plundered the town and treasury, and made off for the jungles.

Such was the general position, with which, within the first few months of the Mutiny, Lord Canning was confronted. It was impossible to define the area of probable disturbance or to gauge its intensity. It was impossible to conjecture where next the flames would break out, how far the conflagration might extend. In Upper India it already glowed fiercely. All Bengal might, at any moment, be in a blaze. The great necessity of the moment was, first, to keep open the main lines of communication which led from Calcutta and Bombay to the scene of action; secondly, to prevent,—and, if prevention were impossible, to delay—explosions in Bengal which there were for the present no means of suppressing; thirdly, to prevent the struggle from becoming what the temper of the English was threatening to make it, a war of races.

For several months the position became increasingly critical. The British army before Delhi, despite all that Lawrence could do to reinforce it with Punjab levies, was enormously outnumbered, and daily fights were thinning its ranks. The idea of seizing Delhi by a *coup de main* had been abandoned. Many doubted whether, even by regular siege operations, its reduction was possible; for the besieging force could attack it only on one side, and behind its walls were all the resources of the insurrection and a constant inflow of recruits.

In July the rescue of the Cawnpur garrison had

become an affair of hours. Havelock had been selected for the task. Not less a military than a religious enthusiast, he had been for forty years preparing himself, by study and much varied service, for the realisation of his long cherished dream—the command of a British army in the field. Some derided his pietism, some his theoretic researches, some his care-worn features and emaciated frame; but Sir H. Hardinge had said of him: 'If ever India should be in danger, the Government have only to place Havelock at the head of an army, and it will be saved.' The moment had now arrived to test the truth of the prediction.

On the 7th July Havelock started from Allahábád, fought his way, through a series of fierce encounters, to the battlefield before Cawnpur, where the Náná—his hands red with European blood—was awaiting the advent of the avenging force. The resistance was long and fierce, but Havelock and Havelock's army were in no mood to be resisted. In a few hours the rebels were rushing in confusion from the field; the Náná, who had been descried during the day riding from post to post, rallying his wavering ranks, was himself spurring hard to his refuge at Bithúr, and the inhabitants of Cawnpur, cowering at the retributive fury of the English, were streaming in panic out of the city into the surrounding country.

They well might fear, for Havelock's troops heard news next morning, and witnessed sights that even now cannot be recalled without a thrill of horror.

Their forced marches under the fierce July sun, their long days of hard fighting, had been in vain. They had come too late—too late, that is, for anything but vengeance. The vestiges of recent tragedy were around them—the clotted floor, the shreds of hair and clothing, the ghastly well, where lay the last victims of the fierce Maráthá's lust for English blood. The dreadful story was soon told. About 400 English combatants and an equal number of women and children had been collected at a spot where defence, for more than a few days, was impossible. They were surrounded by a fully-equipped army of 3000 men. On June 5th the Sepoy regiments had risen and marched away to Delhi. The Náná, who had till then professed to be assisting the English, took the command. Conscious of the cool welcome which a Maráthá leader was likely to receive from the Musalmáns at Delhi, he induced the rebel force to return with him to Cawnpur. From that moment the doom of the garrison was sealed. The so-called siege was one long massacre throughout. All the artillerymen were killed or wounded in the first week. On June 11th the thatch of the barrack, which had afforded a scanty refuge to the women, children and wounded men, was fired by red-hot balls, and the whole building was presently a mass of flames. On the 10th a message from Sir Henry Lawrence at Lucknow had told the doomed garrison that he was powerless to help them. Two fierce assaults were repelled. Misery, exposure, exhaustion, the ceaseless

rush of shot and shell, and the merciless summer sun, were rapidly thinning the remnant of English fighters. Water was to be had only at the cost of precious lives. Provisions began to fail. The end had come. The Náná's offer of a safe conduct gave the only chance of escape. On June 27th the fatal move began, and, a few hours later, the blackest perfidy of modern times was enacted.

The survivors of that afternoon's fusillade were dragged back for the further torture of imprisonment. Eighteen days later, on July 15th, as Havelock's avenging force drew near, the despot of the hour decreed a last revel of ferocity, and when the English columns entered Cawnpur, they found—so far as their own countrymen were concerned—a city of the dead. No one of English birth—man, woman, or child—remained to tell the dreadful tale. Was the same tragedy, the baffled rescuers asked themselves, to be re-enacted at Lucknow?

A deep gloom fell on leader and men. Havelock's spirits sank. 'If the worst came to the worst,' he said to his son that evening, 'we can but die with our swords in our hands.' Lucknow was to be relieved, but was relief achievable? The task was a serious one. His march lay for fifty miles through a country swarming with enemies. Several large armies threatened his line of advance. He was leaving an ill-defended base, a great river in his rear, the bridge over which might easily be destroyed, and his retreat thus be cut off. At the end there was the Lucknow garrison, penned

up in a corner of a huge city, thick-set with defensible buildings, crowded with combatants, through which the rescuing force would have to fight its way. On July 25th Havelock's march began. After a fortnight's hard fighting he was forced to recognise that his strength was inadequate, and to fall back on Cawnpur, now seriously threatened by a rebel force advancing from Bithúr. Even at Cawnpur, Havelock's position became precarious, and he was obliged to warn the Government that, unless speedily reinforced, he might have to fall back on Allahábád. Not till the third week in September did Outram's welcome reinforcements enable the two leaders to start for the rescue of the Lucknow garrison.

The weeks during which Havelock was fast-held at Cawnpur were eventful at two other centres of interest. At Lucknow it had been felt from the moment of the outbreak at Meerut that a siege was inevitable. Sir H. Lawrence had been reluctant to endanger the tranquillity of the rest of the Province by disbanding the Sepoy regiments at Lucknow; but he had prepared to stand on the defensive. As the country round rose into rebellion, Lucknow became the one isolated position in Oudh where British authority was upheld. Its isolation was perilous. On June 30th a British force, which had started from Lucknow to meet an approaching army of the mutineers, was deserted, as the action began, by the native Artillery, and encountered a severe repulse; it retired with difficulty, and soon found itself actually besieged. Lawrence lived

but to see the commencement of the siege; but the spirit of that brave, generous and romantic nature continued to inspire the leaders of that heroic defence. Its incidents are familiar history. The garrison was greatly outnumbered and ill-supplied; the defences were weak, hurriedly constructed, and, in parts, unfinished: the position was, according to every rule of war, indefensible. Defended it was, however, at a terrible cost of human life and suffering, for eighty-seven days. The garrison held its own, unaided, till September 25th. On that day Outram and Havelock, with their long-expected succour, fought their way into the Residency—a reinforcement, not a relief; for the heavy losses entailed by the operation made it clear that it would be impossible, with the existing forces, to attempt the removal of the non-combatants. Outram's little army had greatly increased the powers of the defence; but it also greatly increased the rate at which provisions were consumed. As evacuation was impossible, the position of the garrison was, in one sense, more critical than ever. Not till November 17th did the hour of deliverance come.

Meanwhile, the fate of the Empire seemed to depend on the little force which, barely able to protect its own position, was clinging fiercely to a single side of the Delhi ramparts. On June 8th, two English forces, combining from Ambála and Meerut, had driven the mutineers in confusion from the field, and taken up their position on a ridge of stony ground which faces the city's northern side. Some bold spirits urged

an immediate assault. An accident alone, on one occasion in the early days of the siege, prevented the trial of that audacious experiment. But the persistent attacks on the British position, the heavy losses, the serious wear and tear, the certainty that the resources of the Punjab were approaching exhaustion, inspired the responsible leaders of the force with the gravest anxiety as to the impending assault. It was a cast of the die, and the fortunes of English rule in India depended on it. Who can wonder that human nerve should shrink from so fateful a crisis? June and July were spent in a series of encounters which, if they disheartened the rebels, grievously taxed the slender resources of the besiegers. In August, Nicholson's appearance on the scene with a force which he had taught to think nothing impossible inspired fresh spirits and brighter hopes. Early in September the arrival of the siege-train, and of the last reinforcements which could be expected from the Punjab, decided the moment of attack. The English General now had 8748 men at his disposal, 3317 only of them his own countrymen. Batteries were hastily run up, a cannonade opened upon September 11th, and, by the evening of the 13th, a practicable breach had been effected. Early on the morning of the 14th, Nicholson led the assaulting force to its great emprise. His fall dimmed the successes of a day bright with British heroism; but he lingered long enough to know that the object of the long and costly struggle had been attained. Delhi was again in the hands of the British; the old

Mughal monarch was a prisoner, and the principal nucleus of insurrection was destroyed.

The re-conquest of Upper India, however, was still far from completion. The fall of Delhi, important as was its moral effect, made substantially little difference to the rebel numbers. The garrison had escaped, and the hostile forces, previously occupying various portions of the country, were strengthened by the accession of a garrison till now concentrated for the defence of the besieged city. Outram and Havelock had heard of the fall of Delhi as they were entering Lucknow, but they were practically prisoners in that city.

The task of rescuing them devolved on the newly-arrived Commander-in-Chief. It was no light one. Sir Colin Campbell, on his arrival in Calcutta, found a general sense of disaster and discouragement. There was much to be done before an advance upon Lucknow could be attempted. The war departments at Calcutta had to be strengthened into increased efficiency: transport for reinforcements to be provided; the line of advance from Calcutta to Cawnpur —dangerously exposed throughout its entire length —to be secured. It was not till the close of October that the Commander-in-Chief was able to quit Calcutta for the theatre of war. After a narrow escape of being taken prisoner, *en route,* Sir Colin reached Allahábád on November 1st. His position was critical. To his north lay Oudh, and the districts, eastward and westward, which had been caught in the Oudh

conflagration—Oudh, with its dense population, now pledged to the rebel cause—its feudal Chiefs, its impenetrable jungles, its hundreds of strongholds,—and Lucknow in its midst, where Outram and Havelock were held fast-bound by 60,000 rebels. To the north-west, the post of Fatehgarh, one of the most important strategical positions in Upper India, had been seized by a rebel Chief, who was thus master of the Central Doáb. To the north of this again, all Rohilkhand, a rich and warlike Province, was in arms. Its capital, Bareilly, and other large towns, were in rebel hands. The revolted Gwalior Contingent was hovering on Sir Colin's flank, and, within a few miles of Cawnpur, a formidable army was assembled under the banner of Náná Sáhib.

Outram had sent a message to Sir Colin at Cawnpur that the Lucknow garrison could hold out till November 18th, and the problem was how to rescue them before that date and get back before the Allahábád line of communication could be broken by the Gwalior Contingent, or the English reserve, left to hold Cawnpur, be crushed by the Náná's army advancing from Bithúr.

The rebel positions in Lucknow had, it was known, been greatly strengthened since the relieving English force had fought its way across them in the preceding September; but Havelock had lost nearly 1000 men—a third of his entire force—on that occasion, and Sir Colin had now not only to surmount the new obstacles but to bring away a large crowd of non-combatants.

There was, moreover, the likelihood that on his return he might find the bridge over the Ganges destroyed, its banks strongly defended, and the force which he had left to guard Cawnpur assailed by an overwhelming foe.

On November 12th, Sir Colin reviewed the little army with which this brilliant feat of strategy was to be achieved. An onlooker has described the scene—the force, dwarfed by its surroundings to a mere handful of men, drawn up in the middle of a vast plain—the forests which bounded the horizon—the blackened and battle-worn guns and batteries from Delhi—English lancers with their blue uniforms and turbans twisted round their caps—wild frontier troopers on prancing horses, with loose fawn-coloured robes, long boots, and towering head-gear—the worn and wasted remnants of English regiments in slate-coloured uniform, standing, with wearied air, around their standards—tall Punjab Infantry with huge twisted turbans and sand-coloured tunics, and, conspicuous among the rest, the 93rd Highlanders—'a waving sea of plumes and tartans'—as with rapturous cheers they greeted their veteran chief.

The long stubborn fight across the defences and through the streets of Lucknow, and the successful rescue of the British garrison, skilfully and gallantly effected in the course of the next few days, marked the second great step towards the rehabilitation of the British rule; but Sir Colin had to hurry back to rescue the force at his base from annihilation. Wind-

ham, whom he left to hold Cawnpur, had encountered Tántia Topi, at the head of a powerful and well-equipped army, and had been driven back on his entrenchments. Cawnpur was in the hands of the enemy. The Gwalior army of 25,000 men, flushed with success, and arrayed in a strong position, awaited the English General's attack. A determined attempt was made by the rebel leader to break the Bridge of Boats, and thus prevent the reunion of the English forces. But Sir Colin brought his army successfully across the river, and on the last day of November the rescued Lucknow non-combatants were safely established on the Cawnpur side. Having despatched the convoy to Allahábád the English General made his dispositions for a combat, upon the issues of which the fortunes of the British in Upper India were depending. His victory of the 6th of December avenged the fortunes of his lieutenant, and shattered the rebel forces beyond recovery. Thus, in the closing weeks of 1857, a third great step towards re-establishment of British ascendancy had been achieved.

CHAPTER VI

Conquest

The months during which these events were occurring in Upper India threw a heavy weight of anxiety upon the Governor-General and his co-adjutors at Calcutta. The first shock of surprise had speedily been followed by tidings which left no doubt as to the nature of the impending conflict. Each day brought a heavier tale of outbreaks, massacres, desperate conflicts, or scarcely less desperate escapes. It became apparent that at numerous points the English were in supreme peril. It was apparent, too, that the means at the disposal of the Government were utterly inadequate for their protection. Reinforcements had been sought in various quarters—Madras, Bombay, Ceylon, Lord Elgin's China force. Before May was over they were beginning to arrive, but they came in driblets, as compared with the multitudinous array of insurgents; and still smaller were the driblets in which it was possible, with existing facilities, or such as could be extemporised, to send them to the front. Meanwhile the whole country was like a volcanic soil seamed with igneous material, which, at any moment, at any spot, may burst into flames.

'Our hold on Bengal and the Upper Provinces,' the Governor-General wrote to Lord Elgin on May 19th, 'depends upon the turn of a word—a look. An indiscreet act, or irritating phrase from a foolish commanding officer at the head of a mutinous or disaffected company may, whilst the present condition of things at Delhi lasts, lead to a general rising of the native troops in the Lower Provinces, where we have no European strength, and where an army in rebellion would have everything its own way for weeks and months to come. We have seen within the last few days what that way would be.'

'Here,' Lord Canning wrote, a few days later, to Sir J. Lawrence, with reference to the successful disarming of the Punjab regiments, 'from Calcutta up to Agra, we are in a very different position, and must play a very different game. With the exception of Dinápur, where there is one weak Queen's Regiment, not a single European soldier exists over a stretch of 750 miles. It would be impossible to take the Sepoys' arms from them; and, if it were done, we should not be much the better for it. There are no sufficient numbers of any other class in whose hands the arms could be placed with safety. All that can be done at present is to put on a bold front, and to collect strength as rapidly as possible. If the rebels at Delhi are crushed before the flame spreads, all will go well. Time is everything, and delay will severely try Cawnpur, Benares, and Oudh.'

The Delhi rebels, however, were not crushed and

the flames were mounting high. At Calcutta the English community, profoundly shocked and agitated, began to criticise and condemn the action of the Government. Lord Canning was mortified to find that some of the officials about him were not giving him the moral support for which, at such a crisis, he had a right to look. There was much despondent talk, many prophets of evil. Circumstances made it necessary for the Governor-General to assume a confidence which he was far from feeling, and to avoid everything that might suggest to the population of Bengal the idea that the emergency was acute enough to drive the Government to extraordinary expedients. Such a policy does not admit of being publicly explained. Too little trouble was, perhaps, taken to explain it.

Lord Canning found himself working in an atmosphere highly charged with the electricity which soul-stirring events, unexampled disasters, sudden dangers, engender in the public mind. There was thunder in the air—fierce outbursts from agitated and angry men—a hostile press—violent pamphlets, violent speeches, violent acts—everything that could agitate, unnerve, provoke. Yet Lord Canning laboured on in unruffled equanimity. His letters at this time breathe a really noble tone. 'The sky is black,' he wrote to Bishop Wilson, 'and, as yet, the signs of a clearing are faint. But reason and common sense are on our side from the very beginning. The course of the Government has been guided by justice

and temper. I do not know that any one measure of precaution and strength which human foresight can indicate has been neglected. There are stout hearts and clear heads at the chief posts of danger—Agra, Lucknow, Benares. For the rest, the issue is in higher hands than ours. I am very confident of complete success.'

It was hard that a mood so high-toned and courageous should not have found support in the sympathy and confidence of the English community. But the English in Calcutta were now in no sympathising temper. Again and again it was Lord Canning's lot to provoke their distrust, dislike, resentment. They were angered by his fancied reluctance to accept their services as Volunteers for the defence of Calcutta. They were angered at the neglect of precautions which to them seemed obvious and necessary, but which reasons of policy led Lord Canning to veto or postpone. They were angered at restrictions of the press, European as well as native, which the position rendered imperative. They were angered at the rule which obliged European and native alike to obtain a license for carrying fire-arms. The grievance was purely sentimental: but the English were not in a mood to tolerate anything which implied equality between themselves and the natives of the country. The tragedies of the Mutiny were bearing fruit in a fierce, sometimes a ferocious, spirit of revenge. The sufferings of our countrymen had engendered an appetite for blood — an appetite which grows by

what it feeds on. Revenge is an intoxicating cup. The less sober of the English ministers of vengeance were becoming intoxicated. There was excess, there was violence, there was indiscriminating retaliation. To men in this temper Lord Canning's calm and judicial mood was profoundly distasteful. He felt, and showed that he felt, some contempt for personal terrors, to which he was constitutionally a stranger—something more than contempt for the ruthless mood which such terrors engender. But those who inferred from Lord Canning's cold exterior that thinner blood throbbed in his veins than in their own, judged him wrongly. He was stirred by passions as human as theirs. The first news of the insurrection convinced him that signal punishment ought to be inflicted on the Meerut mutineers and their fellow-rebels, now masters of Delhi. 'No amount of severity,' he wrote to the Lieutenant-Governor at Agra in May, 1857, 'can be too great.' 'I should rejoice,' he writes in the same month to the Commander-in-Chief, 'to hear that there had been no holding our men, and that the vengeance had been terrible.' But a calmer, more equitable mood had replaced in Lord Canning's mind the first hot rush of indignation. He was determined to discriminate, and to compel the tribunals to which, in the first moments of emergency, dangerously large powers of life and death had been entrusted, to do the same. His Proclamation to this effect, issued in July, roused a storm of indignation. A great journal in England, after much contemptuous derision of the

cheap virtue of humanity at other people's expense, denounced the 'clemency of Canning' as ill-timed weakness, and boldly advanced the proposition that the suppression of the Mutiny must be left to the unfettered hands of the military authorities. 'They,' it was said, 'must know, not only what is best to be done, but what is the only thing possible under the circumstances.'

Lord Canning, however, was more and more convinced of the necessity of putting a check on the violent temper of his countrymen. 'There is a rabid and indiscriminate vindictiveness abroad,' he wrote to the Queen in September, 'even among those who ought to set a better example. . . . Not one man in ten seems to think that the hanging and shooting of 40,000 or 50,000 men can be otherwise than practicable and right.'

Excitement was excusable, for ever since May the horror of the situation had been becoming more intense. When Sir Colin Campbell arrived in August, things were almost at their worst. The little besieging force was clinging grimly to the Delhi ridge, but the standard of rebellion still flouted us from its walls. Cawnpur had witnessed a disaster of which Englishmen could scarcely bear to speak. The Lucknow garrison was sorely pressed. Havelock was fast-bound at Cawnpur. The line of communication with Upper India was menaced throughout its entire length. At one time it was actually severed, and it seemed as if Behar were lost and the tide of trouble

were about to roll down upon Bengal. The gallant stand of an amateur garrison at Arrah, their rescue by Vincent Eyre and his vigorous pursuit of the Dinápur mutineers, re-established British ascendancy at this endangered spot, checked the downward progress of insurrection, and set free once again the flow of reinforcements towards the scenes where their arrival was of such vital importance.

A question which, in the course of July, Lord Canning was called to decide, marks the darkest hour of the storm. Early in June Sir John Lawrence had faced the possibilities suggested by the precarious position of the besieging force at Delhi. To reinforce it he had drained the Punjab of its last man. No help could be looked for elsewhere: but the leaders before Delhi were doubtful of success, doubtful indeed whether the attempt should be made. If it failed, the consequences would be to place the surrounding country and the Punjab in extremest peril. Across the Indus were three European regiments, a powerful force of artillery, and some of the best native troops, whose presence would assure order in the Punjab and settle the fate of Delhi in a week. If Delhi could not be taken otherwise, it might be necessary, Lawrence suggested, to concentrate this force, leaving Pesháwar and the Trans-Indus Valley in the custody of Dost Muhammad, with a promise of ultimate cession to him of that much-coveted region. This is no place to enter upon the controversy which this proposal evoked, or to discuss the arguments with which Edwardes and

Nicholson met it. The alternative on either side was deplorable. Edwardes's view was that the General before Delhi should be told 'that he could have no more men from the Punjab, that he must either get into Delhi with such men as he had, or get reinforcements from below, or abandon the siege and fall back on the Sutlej, leaving Delhi and its dependencies to be re-organised in the cold weather.' . . . 'If General Reid,' he wrote to Lawrence, 'with all the men you have sent him, cannot get into Delhi, let Delhi go. . . . You have made vast efforts for him, and no one can blame you for now recovering your own Province.'

The security of his own Province, however, had from the outset filled but a part, and not the largest part, of Lawrence's thoughts. He was convinced that the abandonment of the siege of Delhi, or its failure, would be an imperial disaster. He was prepared, if needs be, to make any sacrifice with a view to its prevention. He now pointed out that, even from the Punjab point of view, it would be fatal to leave Delhi untaken and the besieging army to its fate. 'The Punjab,' he said, 'will prove short work to the mutineers when the Delhi army is destroyed.' Nicholson, in a conversation with Lawrence, pleaded that other places rather than Pesháwar might be abandoned. 'Give up everything,' he said, 'but Peshâwar, Lahore, and Múltân:' but Lawrence objected that such a measure would isolate those three places, lock up a fine force in Peshâwar, and expose us to destruction in detail.' Dark indeed must have been the prospect

when men such as Lawrence, Edwardes and Nicholson could feel such desperate alternatives to be within sight. Happily, the moment for adopting one or other of them never came. We can read Lord Canning's letter, giving the grounds of his own decision on the point, merely as a vivid picture of the situation and of the terrible perils which at the moment beset the British rule.

'My answer to your question about Pesháwar,' he wrote to Lawrence on July 15th, 'will be, Hold on to Pesháwar to the last. I should look with great alarm to the effect in Southern India of an abandonment of Pesháwar at the present time—or at any time until our condition in the south becomes either more desperate or more secure. Remember how fearfully weak we are in Central India, and everywhere to the south of it. It is true that in Central India itself things are already at their worst. Holkar himself, as well as his troops, has turned against us, and, although I do not know the same for certain of Sindhia, I have little doubt of it. But as yet the wave of rebellion has not reached the Narbadá. The Nizám and the Gáekwár are still staunch, and believe in our supremacy. Nágpur too is kept down. If we were now to abandon territory, no matter how distant, it would be impossible that faith in the permanency of our rule should not be shaken. The encouragement to join the league against us would be irresistible and immediate; its effect would be felt long before we should receive any material benefit from the force

which would be set free by the abandonment: and in the event of a rising in the Deccan, or on the side of Baroda, our position would be hopeless unless we could keep the Native Governments on our side. I look upon Central India as gone, and to be re-conquered; and I believe that Southern India, that is, from Gujarát on the west to Nágpur on the east, and downwards to Cape Comorin, is at present in a more critical position than any part of the Punjab, not excepting Peshâwar itself. Sir Patrick Grant is pretty sure of the Madras Army, and some three or four regiments will be brought to Bengal to ease our exhausted Europeans. The family system of the Madras regiments gives the Government a great hold on them, especially in the present case, when the families will be left in Madras. Still, if the Deccan were to rise, the Madras Army would not be equal to cope with the difficulty; and the Cavalry, almost entirely Muhammadan, could not be trusted, in spite of all checks upon it. On the Bombay side, I fear there is already some taint in the army. How can it be otherwise? One half is Hindústaní, and pretty much of the same materials as the Bengal regiments. I should not like to see them tempted by any open resistance to us in Gujarát or elsewhere near at hand to them.... Of Delhi I know nothing later than the 19th, and I begin to despair of hearing any good from there. The arrival of Chamberlain and Nicholson is the best remaining ground of hope.'

In a postscript he adds:—

'I have objected to the abandonment of Peshâwar upon one ground alone—the bad effects which would result from it at the present crisis; and this for the moment is the paramount objection. But I also incline to the mountain boundary in preference to the river. The expense is inordinately large, and will continue so as long as a large European force is retained on the other side of the Indus. Yet, as a military frontier, I have never seen the case satisfactorily made out in favour of the river.'

Amid such anxieties throughout this eventful year, Lord Canning continued to perform his arduous task with unruffled calmness and unshaken nerve. One of his letters to Lord Granville towards the end of 1857 breathes a serene and magnanimous spirit, and shows how thoroughly he had thought out the grounds which rendered a policy of conciliation essential.

'Look at a map. With all the reinforcements you have sent (all the Bengal ones are arrived, except 800 men) Bengal is without a single European soldier more than we had at the beginning of the Mutiny, Calcutta alone excepted, which is stronger. Twenty-three thousand men have moved through Bengal, and in Bengal we are still dependent (mainly) upon the good-will—I can't say affection, and interest—well understood by themselves—of the natives.

'Suppose (not an impossibility, although I hope not a likelihood)—suppose that hostilities train on, and that we don't make our way with Oudh and other disturbed places, that our strength becomes again

a subject of doubt—will it be the part of a wise Government to keep such a population as that of the three great Provinces in a loyal frame of temper? Can you do so, if you proscribe and scout as unworthy whole classes?

'For God's sake, raise your voice and stop this. As long as I have breath in my body, I will pursue no other policy than that I have been following: not only for the reason of expediency and policy above stated, but because it is immutably just. I will not govern in anger. Justice, and that as stern, as inflexible as law and might can make it, I will deal out. But I will never allow an angry and undiscriminating act or word to proceed from the Government of India as long as I am responsible for it.

'I don't care two straws for the abuse of the papers, British or Indian. I am for ever wondering at myself for not doing so, but it really is the fact. Partly from want of time to care, partly because an enormous task is before me, and all other cares look small.

'I don't want you to do more than defend me against unfair or mistaken attacks. But do take up and assert boldly that, whilst we are prepared, as the first duty of all, to strike down resistance without mercy, wherever it shows itself, we acknowledge that, resistance over, deliberate justice and calm patient reason are to resume their sway; that we are not going, either in anger or from indolence, to punish wholesale; whether by wholesale hangings and burn-

ings, or by the less violent, but not one bit less offensive, course of refusing trust and countenance and favour and honour to any man because he is of a class or a creed. Do this, and get others to do it, and you will serve India more than you would believe.'

Those who raved against Lord Canning little knew of the nobility of the man whom they were endeavouring to ruin. The friends who were admitted to his confidence found that, under a cold and unimpassioned exterior, there glowed the warm instincts of chivalry. Sir Frederick Halliday, who was Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal in 1857 and in constant and confidential communication with the Governor-General, narrates how, on one occasion, when the outcry against him was loudest, Lord Canning showed him papers illustrating the scandalous brutality of certain of the special tribunals. The Lieutenant-Governor urged their publication, by way of reply to his calumniators. 'No,' said Lord Canning, taking the papers and locking them up in his drawer, 'I had rather submit to any obloquy than publish to the world what would so terribly disgrace my countrymen. It is sufficient that I have prevented them for the future.'

At the opening of the new year Lord Canning decided to move to Allahábád, both for freer opportunities of communication with the Commander-in-Chief during the impending operations in Oudh and Rohilkhand, and with a view to a more complete

mastery of the Oudh question and to the re-organisation of the government of the North-Western Provinces, many parts of which had lapsed into something like anarchy. Colonel Stuart, who was Military Secretary to the Governor-General during these eventful months, gives in his diary a vivid idea of the anxious and dispiriting circumstances under which Lord Canning assumed the functions of the Lieutenant-Governor, and addressed himself to this serious enhancement of his already heavy task.

In February Mr. (Sir W.) Muir, the Secretary to the Government of the North-Western Provinces, arrived from Agra with a staff of fifty clerks, awaiting inspiration from his new Chief and adding hourly to his toils. The tremendous strain of the past year was beginning to tell upon the Governor-General's health. In January, Lady Canning, herself bearing sad evidence of the anxieties which her Indian life had involved, learnt with apprehension that a respite at Simla was out of the question for her husband. She began to feel doubtful of his physical ability to bear the burthen, and to wish for his resignation. Lord Canning, however, was in no mood to shirk his task, or spare nerve or muscle in its accomplishment. Again and again Colonel Stuart's diary records feats of long continued effort, such as no man can accomplish with impunity—entire nights passed at the desk—long days without an instant's intermission devoted to despatches for which an English mail was waiting. On the 10th January, Colonel Stuart records that, after labouring

incessantly from 2 a.m. till luncheon time, without even an interval for breakfast, Lord Canning 'fell back, quite exhausted, and could do no more. The action of the brain had ceased. This has happened before. . . .' Lord Granville mentions that somewhat similar seizures had, at an earlier period of his life, befallen Lord Canning; once in the House of Lords, and once again when, shooting with the Prince Consort, he was apprehensive, for an instant, of having fired in the direction of the Prince of Wales. Whatever might be the cause, Lord Canning showed himself no mercy. A half-hour's stroll before dinner, a visit to some military hospital, an occasional ride, sometimes, by his doctor's injunction, a short drive at sunrise—such was the nearest approach to relaxation which zeal and conscience allowed him. Nor did he labour alone. Lady Canning shared his toil. General Stuart's diary makes more than one allusion to occasions on which that faithful companion laboured far into the night, copying letters or despatches which, for one reason or another, were not allowed to pass through the ordinary official channels.

In the meantime Indian affairs were attracting attention in England. In January, 1858, Lord Palmerston had introduced a Bill transferring the government of India from the East India Company to the Crown. The measure was one which, though not so intrinsically important as its form suggested, was grave enough to give the Governor-General some anxiety. He was apprehensive that, on the

removal of the time-honoured barriers which safeguarded Indian topics from interference, Parliament might be betrayed into rash and ill-considered action. In February a new cause of disquietude was added. Lord Palmerston's defeat on his Conspiracy to Murder Bill brought into office a Ministry, many of whose members had shown themselves ready to criticise in no friendly spirit Lord Canning's Indian administration—Lord Derby, Mr. Disraeli, the impetuous and rhetorical Ellenborough. How was Lord Canning to work with a new and, probably, unfriendly Cabinet? The embarrassment was not lessened by the circumstance that by the mail, which brought the tidings of the change, Lord Canning received no communication from any member of the new Government, but merely private letters from Lord Granville and Lord Aberdeen, dissuading him from resignation. The Governor-General was thus obliged to address the new President of the Board of Control without having learnt his views with regard to his continuance in office. He wrote, accordingly, that he had no intention of resigning unless called upon to do so; but, at the same time, letting Lord Ellenborough understand that he would submit to no improper interference. The next mail cleared away all uncertainty by bringing three letters from Lord Ellenborough, friendly in tone and based on the assumption that Lord Canning did not contemplate resignation. Letters from Mr. Gladstone, Lord Stratford de Redcliffe, Lord Granville, and from the Chairman of the East India

Company, all pointed in the same direction. Mr. Vernon Smith, though not counselling resignation, showed himself a better prophet than the rest by drawing a discouraging picture of the inconveniences likely to arise from Lord Ellenborough's hasty and dictatorial mood —a prophecy of the soundness of which Lord Canning was soon to experience disagreeable proof.

The course of events in India, however, left the Governor-General but scanty leisure to weigh the chances of attacks from home. The Mutiny was far from being dead. Lucknow, since the relief of its garrison in the November of the preceding year, had remained in the hands of the insurgents. The Commander-in-Chief was in favour of the next movement being directed against the rebels to the north-westward, in Rohilkhand, leaving the reduction of Lucknow—a very serious enterprise—to be accomplished later in the year. Lord Canning, however, decided that the capture of the Oudh capital ought to be forthwith undertaken. There were good reasons for the decision. The fall of Lucknow would have a great moral effect. It had filled the public eye. For many months all India had beheld the unprecedented spectacle of an English garrison barely able to hold its own behind the Residency entrenchments. Ever since the relief in November it had defied us. Friend and foe were now watching its fate. Outram, who had remained on guard at the Alambágh, an outpost a few miles south, had been frequently and fiercely assailed. It was now for the

English to attack. The defences of the city had been greatly strengthened since the English garrison quitted the Residency in November of the preceding year. Its present garrison was estimated at 120,000 men, of whom 27,000 were trained Sepoys and 7000 Cavalry. Three formidable lines of resistance had been constructed against an advancing enemy. The palaces, gardens, mosques and public buildings, with which a series of luxurious Sovereigns had embellished the city, had been converted into formidable strongholds. Sir Colin now, by a skilful disposition, diminished the cost and peril of the assault. The city of Lucknow lies along the south bank of the river Gúmti, one of the great affluents of the Ganges, which traverses the Province of Oudh. In this direction the defences had been comparatively neglected. Taking advantage of this omission, Sir Colin, on March 5th, sent Outram across the river to operate on its northern side, whence he would be able to enfilade the enemy's powerful positions from an unexpected quarter and divert much of their attention, while Sir Colin, with the main force, fought his way, day by day, through the loopholed streets and strongly barricaded buildings of the city. The programme was brilliantly realised; but the resistance was obstinate, and it was not till March 17th that the Residency was occupied and the last of the rebels driven out. One of those mishaps, which so often in military history mar the splendour of a success, favoured the escape of most of the garrison,

some into Rohilkhand, where Náná Sáhib and other leaders were established in force, some into the jungles of Oudh, where, buried in their forest strongholds, hundreds of warlike Chieftains welcomed all comers to the standard of rebellion. The capture of Lucknow may be regarded as the fourth great episode in the re-establishment of British rule. The fifth was now to commence. Rohilkhand, the country which lay along the left bank of the Upper Ganges, had for many months been a dangerous centre of disturbance. Lord Canning resolved that measures for its subjugation must be at once undertaken. Sir Colin Campbell, whom a well-deserved peerage had by this time converted into Lord Clyde, proceeded to effect this object by a concentration of forces, advancing from different points of the compass upon Bareilly, the capital of the Province. A few weeks sufficed for the accomplishment of this programme. Before the close of May, 1858, a decisive engagement had shattered the fortunes of the rebel cause. Bareilly had been recovered; the leaders of the rebellion had fled into Oudh, and British rule was re-established throughout Rohilkhand.

Meanwhile, a great campaign was being fought in Central India. The English leaders had throughout been harassed, on the Jumna line of communication, by the pressure exercised by the Gwalior Contingent and other rebel forces from the Rájputána side. It was determined to relieve this pressure by a great strategic operation from the rear of the assailants.

The programme was that two British columns should simultaneously advance, one, the more eastern, from Jabalpur, due northward across Bundelkhand to Banda—the other moving north-eastward from Mhow upon Jhánsí and Kálpi. Sir Hugh Rose's series of successes, while in command of the latter column, forms one of the most interesting and splendid chapters of English military history. Leaving Indore at the beginning of 1858, he fought his way northward, early in February relieved the beleaguered garrison of Ságar, and on the 21st March appeared before Jhánsí, above the granite walls of which floated the banner of the insurgent Rání. The fort was of great strength, standing on a lofty rock, its walls of solid masonry and bristling with guns. Its garrison of 11,000 men was fired with the fierce enthusiasm of their leader. The besiegers opened a cannonade. For seventeen days the English batteries poured in a ceaseless fire of shot and shell. A breach had been effected, when news arrived that Tántia Topi was advancing from the direction of Kálpi, with 22,000 men and twenty-eight guns, to the relief of the beleaguered Princess. Sir Hugh, without allowing an instant's pause in the operations of the siege, led a portion of the besieging force against his new foe, drove Tántia Topi's army headlong into the jungle, and returned in two days to deliver a successful assault upon the fortress. Jhánsí captured, the victorious General was soon on the road to Kálpi, and, on the 22nd May, encountered the rebel force and inflicted a repulse which seemed

to have definitely settled the fortunes of the campaign. But the heart of the fierce Maráthá woman was still unquelled. On June 4th arrived the startling news that the Ráni and Tántia Topi had combined their shattered armies, had threatened Gwalior's capital—that Sindhia, marching to oppose them, had been deserted by his army and had fled to Agra, and that the Fort of Gwalior was in the rebels' hands. It was a dying rally; for, before the third week in June had closed, Gwalior had been recovered, and Sir Robert (Lord) Napier, catching the rebel army between Agra and Gwalior, had practically annihilated it. Tántia Topi, effecting his escape, continued till the spring of the following year to elude his pursuers, a cordon of whom surrounded him on every side; but, so far as concerned co-operation with the northern mutineers, the rebellion in Rájputána and Central India had been effectually crushed. The wavering Chiefs had no longer reason for indecision. The British ascendancy was secured. This, the sixth great episode of the Mutiny, may be regarded as practically concluding it.

In the autumn Lord Clyde surrounded the Oudh rebels with a cordon of concentrating armies, and gradually swept them across the frontier into Nepál. The spirit of resistance was by this time broken. The Begam of Oudh, who had been one of the chief leaders in resistance, made overtures of submission; the leading landholders followed her example; and by the close of the year nothing remained to be done

but to hunt down the refugees, who were still lurking in the surrounding regions of Nepál and the jungles that fringe the base of the Himálayas.

In May, 1859, Sir Hope Grant, who had been entrusted with the task of stamping out the last embers of rebellion, was able to report that Oudh was completely tranquil and the Mutiny at an end.

Such, in the barest possible outline, is the story of the great military revolt with which it was Lord Canning's task to deal. From first to last it occupied two years. For the first six months the tide of rebellion rose fast and flowed strongly against the rulers of the country. The fall of Delhi came at a moment when the fortunes of England in India seemed to be trembling in the balance, and, but for some such signal demonstration of prowess, the wavering powers of India would presently have thrown in their lot with that which seemed the winning cause. Lord Clyde's rescue of the Lucknow garrison and great victory, at the close of the year, over Tántia Topi struck one staggering blow at the rebel cause; his capture of Lucknow a second; Lord Strathnairn's campaign in Central India a third. The honour of these splendid successes is justly due to the Generals, by whose genius, and the troops by whose gallantry and endurance they were achieved. The general superintendence and direction of the entire series of campaigns, by which the Mutiny was stamped out and the pacification of India secured, rested with

the Governor-General. The responsibility was Lord Canning's; and to him, too, his countrymen's gratitude is due for a result which restored the endangered prestige of British arms, and settled conclusively the question of British supremacy in the East.

Mutinous symptoms came to light wherever native troops were quartered, over a vast local area in Upper and Central India, from the garrisons on the Indus frontier to cantonments on the confines of Assam and across the Bay of Bengal—from the foot of the Himálayas to the capital of the Deccan and the towns which skirt the Western Gháts. The enormous extent of the struggle, its terrible vicissitudes, its dark spots of agony, reverse or mistake, the awful possibilities which beset it, its splendid successes, its long array of noble acts of heroic self-sacrifice, will leave it, so long as Englishmen prize their countrymen's best achievements, among the most fascinating chapters of our military annals.

Its causes are still to a large extent shrouded in the same mystery as hid it from contemporary onlookers. At the best the diagnosis must be imperfect; for many things about the patient's condition and temperament are hidden from us. In such cases it is only presumptuous sciolism which would profess to explain the sequence of events, to indicate the course by which this or that disaster might have been avoided, or to criticise those, to whose hands the conduct of the crisis fell, from the standpoint of superior sagacity. The Mutiny transcended experience. It baffled skill; it

bewildered statesmanship; it was full of surprises to those who were least likely to be surprised; it misled the wisest and the best informed. It bequeathed to us the unpretentious lesson that the government of two hundred millions of human beings, about whom the governing race know little except that they differ, *toto caelo,* from themselves in temperament, belief, taste, and the way of looking at life—is likely to produce unexpected results and to be diversified by unexpected incidents. The occurrence of panics is one of them, though it may be hoped that the fraction of the population, which is yearly raised out of absolute ignorance, will tend, as years go on, to render the occurrence of panics less probable. But, to this day, no great bridge is begun in India without a local panic, baseless and childish as that to which the greased cartridges gave rise.

A second modest lesson follows on the first, namely, that India is not a country with which it is well to play pranks—political, administrative, or philanthropic. The English rule in India, as Sir James Stephen has well observed, represents a belligerent civilisation; England must be prepared to fight as well as to civilise. When, as in 1857, she allows other considerations to outweigh the observance of this precaution, she runs a frightful risk. As a civilised and civilising administration she does, every day, things which millions of her subjects misunderstand, dislike, or disapprove. It is beyond the scope of mortal faculty to conjecture at what point mis-

understanding, dislike or disapproval, may break out in an infectious form, and suddenly convert a tranquil community into a realised chaos. Ignorance, superstition, the wild promptings of heredity, remain —despite a fair exterior of civilisation—tremendous forces. Their combinations can be as little anticipated, as little controlled, as the atmospheric conditions which produce a cyclone.

Amid such surroundings it behoves the ruler to watch carefully, to move slowly, to innovate with cautious reluctance, to turn a deaf ear to the mutterings of ignorance and impatience or the syren song of inexperienced benevolence, and—not least—while busy with his peaceful task, to have, like the Jews of Nehemiah, his weapon near at hand and fit for use.

That there were plenty of malcontents in India delighted to do the British Government an ill turn by encouraging disloyalty, spreading mischievous rumours and raising false hopes, may be taken for granted. But of a conspiracy in the sense of common action, systematically directed towards a common end, there is nothing that deserves the name of evidence. The most searching inquiries failed to produce any direct proof of such a conspiracy.

'It is Sir John Lawrence's very decided impression,' so wrote one who was certainly well qualified to judge, 'that the Mutiny had its origin in the army itself; that it is not attributable to any external or antecedent conspiracy whatever, although it was

afterwards taken advantage of by designing persons to compass their own ends; and that its proximate cause was the cartridge affair and nothing else. Sir John Lawrence has examined hundreds of letters on this subject from natives, both soldiers and civilians. He has, moreover, constantly conversed on the matter with natives of all classes; and he is satisfied that the general—indeed the universal—opinion in this part of India is to the above effect.'

The behaviour of the Sepoy regiments throughout was hardly reconcilable with the idea of a conspiracy. The 19th Native Infantry, who may be said to have led off the Mutiny at Berhampur, were obviously more frightened than rebellious; and, when their fright was over, would gladly, had they been allowed, have returned to their allegiance. Incendiarism—which was the almost invariable prelude of a military outbreak—is the act rather of men wishing to attract attention to their grievances than of members of a plot, whose object would be to escape notice. Again and again it was obvious that, up to the very moment of mutiny, it was uncertain, even with the men themselves, what line they would take, and that some accident—a word, a cry, a sudden alarm—turned the agitated and wavering multitude to the side of rebellion. Again and again mutinies took place under conditions which precluded the possibility of eventual success. Among the leaders of the movement there was no real agreement. The King had

great difficulty in maintaining his ascendancy in Delhi. Náná Sáhib's first act was to persuade the Cawnpur mutineers to return with him to that city instead of joining the common cause; and in Oudh, each of several rebel parties played its own game, regardless of, and often in opposition to, the interests of the rest. In connexion with this branch of the subject, it is satisfactory to remember that no Native State took part against us, though the loyalty of two of them led to the desertion of their armies—that several of them gave us active and valuable help—that, outside the central region of disaffection, the upper classes showed no indication of sympathy with the movement, and in Lower Bengal plainly discountenanced it, and that, though several of the leaders of the movement were, as might have been expected, persons who considered themselves aggrieved by the British administration, their conduct was obviously rather the outcome of individual idiosyncrasy than the natural result of English policy. Nothing that it was in the power of the Government to do, or to refrain from doing, would have made Náná Sáhib anything but a treacherous savage, or have tamed the fierce Maráthá blood that throbbed in the heart of the Rání of Jhánsí.

The circumstance that the North-Western Provinces were overrun by the mutineers, that the Oudh Táluk-dárs, *en masse*, joined the rebel cause, and that Lord Canning thought right, in re-organising the land-revenue system of the Province to do so on a basis

more favourable to their position than that which had been accorded to them in the Provisional Settlement operations at the time in progress, has been the excuse for much misplaced denunciation of the policy of land-administration, of which Mr. Thomason was the most distinguished advocate in the North-West Provinces, and which Lord Lawrence had rigorously enforced in the Punjab. It may be sufficiently described as a system which looked with disfavour on the various landlord interests, which in India have a tendency to grow up between the State on the one hand and the original owner and actual cultivator of the soil on the other. It has sometimes been even asserted that the area of the insurrection was co-extensive with that in which this policy had been allowed free play, and that, in fact, it was one of the motive causes of which the Mutiny was an effect. It would be difficult, without plunging into a still existent controversy, to set forth the grounds on which such a view is regarded by an important school of Indian administrators as unsound and fallacious. It is true, no doubt, that the curtailment of their privileges did incline the Oudh Tálukdárs to take part against the rulers who had ordered that curtailment. It is true too, that the Oudh peasantry were unable to resist the combined influences of the Tálukdárs and the mutinous soldiery, and joined with them in assailing the power, whose main object had been the improvement of their condition. It may be conceded, moreover, that the liberal concessions made to the

Tálukdárs on the close of the Mutiny secured their ready adhesion to the cause of order, and so facilitated the tranquillisation of the country. But all this does not prove that the advocates of the territorial magnates were right, or that the supporters of the peasant interest were wrong, or that the Government had erred in its endeavour to protect the feeblest class of the population from oppression. The condition of the occupiers of the soil must, so long as Indian society remains in its present phase, be one of the principal objects of solicitude to any Government which recognises the welfare of the mass of the inhabitants, rather than the conciliation of a small and privileged class of proprietors, as the object of its existence. The system of land settlement, which is known by the name of its most distinguished advocate, Mr. Thomason, has, it is certain, contributed enormously to the well-being of the agricultural classes wherever it has been introduced. It has rescued large sections of the population from suffering and degradation; it has arrested the triumph of the high-handed oppressor; it has vindicated popular rights, which had been trampled under foot by violence, or juggled away by fraud and chicanery. Its introduction may, in some instances, render the task of government more difficult; but that which is difficult is often right; and it may none the less be the duty of an enlightened and benevolent administration to adhere to its policy of protecting the weak, and to refuse to purchase the adhesion of the strong by condoning oppression. That such a

policy is not inherently adverse to loyalty was sufficiently proved by the fact that, of the many thousands of native soldiers who fought on the English side in the Mutiny, by far the larger proportion had been enlisted in a Province where the system had been long and actively at work.

CHAPTER VII

Lord Canning's Assailants

Throughout the eventful two years which followed the outbreak of the Mutiny, it was Lord Canning's fate to be almost incessantly the object of hostile criticism, on the part sometimes of the European community at Calcutta, sometimes of Parliamentary leaders or journalists at home. It was inevitable that it should be so. At periods, which arrest public attention and profoundly stir public feeling, views are quickly formed, strongly expressed, and pass from man to man with a rapid contagion. Under such a Government, too, as that of India, there is none of the relief which the outspokenness of Parliamentary interpellation in England affords to popular mistrust, misapprehension or disapproval. Many things which Lord Canning and his colleagues did at the outset of the Mutiny were mistrusted, misapprehended and disapproved by those among whom he lived, and to whom the events of the day were matters of grave personal significance. As wave after wave of disastrous news came rolling in, the tension of feeling grew intense, and Lord Canning's calm mood and untroubled demeanour were unendurably irritating to a society which was

becoming anything but calm. The Calcutta public was impatient. Lord Canning had no leisure, perhaps no inclination to allay its impatience. The English press was embittered. Public opinion became increasingly estranged. Towards the close of 1857 the European public of Calcutta and Bengal addressed a petition to the Queen, setting forth in vivid colours the various calamities of which India had of late been the theatre, alleging that these calamities were 'directly attributable to the blindness, weakness and incapacity of the Government,' and praying Her Majesty to mark her disapproval of the policy pursued by the Governor-General by directing his recall.

The Indian Government forwarded this document to the Court of Directors, offering no general reply, but pointing out, in marginal notes, various errors of fact in the allegations of the petition. The petition, thus annotated, forms, accordingly, an authentic summary of the grounds of Lord Canning's unpopularity with the European community. Bootless as it generally is to resuscitate an extinct controversy, it is interesting to consider some of the grounds of complaint, and to realise the sort of difficulties with which—in addition to anxieties necessarily inherent in such a struggle, carried on a thousand miles away, —Lord Canning had to contend in the society around him. The grievance as to the tardiness of the Government in utilising the proffered services of the Volunteers proved not to be of a very substantial

order. Lord Canning's general arrangements, on the first outbreak of the Mutiny at Meerut, were admitted to have been made with praiseworthy expedition. Without an hour's delay he had summoned aid from every available quarter—Madras, Bombay, Ceylon, Lord Elgin and General Ashburnham on their way, with several English regiments, to China. But the Calcutta Volunteers' offer of their services had not been received with corresponding alacrity. Lord Canning now explained how matters really stood. The original offer, May 20th, to serve 'as special constables or otherwise' had been forthwith accepted. On June 12th, when it was ascertained that service as special constables was distasteful, and that there was a general wish that a Volunteer Corps should be enrolled, this measure also was adopted. The Volunteers had been informed, and truly informed, that 'there was no apprehension of disturbance in Calcutta, and that if, unfortunately, any disturbance should occur, the means of crushing it utterly were at hand.' Valuable, accordingly, as had been the assistance of the Volunteers, especially in inspiring confidence in the European and Eurasian population, it could not be conceded that Calcutta had ever been threatened, or that the safety of the city had been owing to the 800 Volunteers, ultimately enrolled, or that their numbers would, as the petition alleged, have been four or five times as great but for the supposed discouragement, offered by the Government in the first instance.

Another complaint was, that during the whole siege of Cawnpur, i.e. from June 4th to July 15th, no attempt was made to relieve it; that the Government might, by enrolling Volunteers, have set free the Calcutta garrison for this purpose, as well as, if necessary, the 2000 or 3000 British sailors in the port. To this the Government replied that every possible exertion had been made to relieve Cawnpur —that troops had been pushed 500 miles up the country at the hottest season of the year by means before unused—that 100 soldiers had been thus conveyed to Cawnpur before the outbreak, and that, even supposing the whole Calcutta garrison to have been at the Government's disposal, the absence of transport rendered it physically impossible to send forward a single soldier in addition to the numbers actually sent.

The delay in disarming the three native regiments at Dinápur was another grievance on which the petitioners relied. The answer was:—First, that, as there was at this station but a single weak European regiment, confronted by three native regiments, and as the mutinous temper of the Sepoys was by no means certain, the Government had not thought it expedient to prematurely risk so hazardous an experiment: second, that the delay of an English regiment on its way to reinforce Havelock, who was waiting fast-bound at Cawnpur, unable for want of strength to advance to the relief of Lucknow, was a certain evil; the necessity of disarming the Dinápur

regiments by no means certain; and that, with a view to this consideration, the General in command at Dinápur, though empowered to stop some of the troops on the march up country, if he decided it to be necessary to disarm the Sepoys, had hesitated to do so: and, thirdly, that, after all, the Dinápur regiments did not mutiny till they had been almost driven to do so by the weak and clumsy measures which the local authorities unfortunately adopted for disarming them.

As to the next ground of complaint, the restriction of the liberty of the press, the petitioners complained especially of the 'aggravation of an inherently odious measure by the weak and wanton confounding of loyal subjects with the seditious and rebellious,' in other words, by the extension of the rules to European as well as to native newspapers. The answer was that the measure was not aimed solely at sedition, but at the prevention of intelligence which, for the special reasons of the moment, it was not expedient to divulge, and of attacks calculated to inflame disaffection at a crisis when it was all-important to guide public feeling in the right direction. In these aspects the English press was as much in need of supervision as the native. The only instance in which, under the Act, a licence had been withdrawn from any English newspaper, and that only for a few days, was 'one on which an important measure of the Government was stigmatised in language directly and obviously calculated to weaken

its authority and to bring it into hatred and contempt among all classes of Her Majesty's subjects'—a degree of licence which it was impossible, in the existing condition of India, to concede.

The next complaint referred to a measure passed in September, 1857, necessitating a licence to carry arms and ammunition. 'Notwithstanding the broad line of distinction,' the petitioners urged, 'which was afforded to the Legislature by the fact of the present movement being avowedly one of race and religion, the Governor-General and his Council refused to make any such distinction, and the Act was made applicable to the Christian as well as the native races.' This the petitioners stigmatised as 'highly offensive and dangerous.' The Government replied that the mutineers formed but a small class of the native population, the great bulk of which continued loyal: that any general distinction, grounded on race, would be unjust and invidious; and that all necessary relaxation could be effected by the power of exempting individuals or classes, for which the Act provided.

The next topic of complaint was a measure which, now that we can look at the subject in cold blood, stands among Lord Canning's strongest claims to respect. During the early months of the Mutiny it had been necessary to invest various civil officers and 'commissions'—often, in fact, consisting of a single individual, selected by the local authority and offering no adequate guarantee of experience or self-restraint —with summary powers of trying and sentencing

all persons suspected of desertion or mutiny. These powers, as was inevitable, had been freely and sometimes indiscriminately used. In July, accordingly, the Governor-General issued a Resolution for the instruction of these tribunals, indicating the lines of distinction which, with a view to justice and the ultimate pacification of the country, officials should observe in dealing with various classes of suspects brought before them. Many soldiers in regiments which had mutinied had shown no sympathy with the movement, but had gone quietly to their homes. To hang such men as mutineers after a summary trial was needless and cruel severity. Instructions were, accordingly, given that the civil tribunals were, for the future, to deal only with such deserters as were found with arms in their possession, or were charged with specific acts of rebellion, or belonged to regiments which had murdered their officers or committed other murderous outrage. All other deserters were to be made over to the military authorities for regular trial. The petition treated these directions as 'tantamount to an amnesty to all mutineers except those who had taken an active part in the murder of their officers or others;' and denounced such leniency as 'misplaced, impolitic, and iniquitous,' as calculated to 'excite contempt and invite attack by exhibiting the Government as so powerless to punish mutiny, or so indifferent to the sufferings of its victims, as to dispense with adequate retribution,' and as thus tending to a prolongation of the struggle. It is a curious instance

of the misleading effects of popular passion that such obvious and moderate precautions against indiscriminate vengeance should have been regarded with disapproval, and that even in England the 'clemency' of their author—for it was on this occasion that the historical nickname of their author first saw the light—should have been made a topic for satirical and depreciatory comment.

Another count of this long indictment showed still more distinctly the real temper of Lord Canning's accusers. It alleged that, notwithstanding numerous instances of treachery on the part of Muhammadan officials, the Governor-General had continued to show his confidence in that class of men by sanctioning the appointment of a Muhammadan to be 'Deputy Commissioner' of Patná, a place of great importance and trust, and of other Muhammadans to other places of trust, 'to the great offence and discouragement of the Christian population of this Presidency.' The letter in which the Commissioner at Patná justified the appointment specially instanced in the petition, puts in a striking light the dangers against which Lord Canning had at this period of his career to contend. The gentleman whose appointment was thus denounced was a Calcutta advocate in large and lucrative practice. He had, throughout, taken an active part in supporting the cause of order, urging his countrymen and co-religionists to loyalty, and supplying useful information, for obtaining which he had special facilities, to the Government. He had abandoned his professional

avocations in order to assist the Behar authorities at a moment when things were at the worst in that Province. His assistance had been invaluable in maintaining tranquillity and in checking outbursts of Muhammadan excitement. The return made by English newspapers for these valuable services had been unfortunate. 'He has,' wrote the Commissioner, 'been the object of ceaseless vituperation. The most treacherous motives have been attributed to him, and he has become, in fact, the *bête noire* of the English press. The main ground of attack against him has been that he was a Muhammadan. The whole of the Calcutta press, apparently without exception, have taken up the idea that this is a Muhammadan rebellion, not merely in the sense that the Sepoys were worked upon by individual Muhammadans—which may or may not be true—but that the entire Muhammadan community is disaffected, and merely waits its opportunity to rise and throw off the British yoke. I need not point out how destitute of foundation this notion is, how entirely unrestrained many millions of Muhammadans in Bengal have been during the last five months, except by their own feelings of loyalty, and how quiet the Muhammadan villages of Southern Behar have been, while Bráhmín and Rájput villages were rising round them. Articles like this have a direct tendency to excite disaffection among large masses of the population, and to convert what is now a military revolt into a national rebellion.'

'Your Majesty's petitioners submit,' so ran the

concluding passages of the petition, 'that the only policy by which British rule and the lives, honour, and properties of your Majesty's Christian subjects in this country can in future be secured, is a policy of such vigorous repression and punishment as shall convince the native races of India—who can be influenced effectually by power and fear alone—of the hopelessness of insurrection against British rule, even when aided by every circumstance of treachery, surprise and cruelty.' The adoption of any milder policy would, the petitioners urged, be regarded as springing wholly from conscious weakness, would lead, at no distant date, to a recurrence of the same scenes, and so endanger the future tranquillity of British India.

Language such as this tells its own tale. It is the language of rage. There was much to excuse it. It would be well to bury it in oblivion, but that it is impossible, without recalling it, to understand the perils of the time and the inestimable service which Lord Canning rendered to his countrymen in the determined and courageous resistance which he offered to a mood which, if it had prevailed, would have gone far to make the ultimate pacification of the country impossible.

Less excuse can be offered for the political partisanship which made the allegations of the Calcutta petition the pretext for an attempt to exclude the Governor-General's name from the vote which, early in 1858, was carried through both Houses of Parliament,

thanking the Indian services, civil and military, for their zeal in the suppression of the Mutiny. These ungenerous attacks on the representative of the Sovereign, engaged in a life and death struggle for the maintenance of the English supremacy in the East, can be now remembered only with sorrow that English statesmen should have been guilty of so ignoble a lapse. They stand a warning to politicians not to tempt the ill-informed and hasty suffrage of a popular assembly to expressions of opinion which, however they may gratify the temper of the moment, are soon recognised as unjust, and have to be repudiated by leaders and followers alike with confusion and remorse. The moment of this attempted slight was that at which, more than at any other period of his career, Canning's nobility of character was safeguarding the Empire from a great danger and Englishmen from an indelible disgrace.

In the spring of 1858 Lord Canning encountered another and still more serious controversial tempest. On the fall of Lucknow a Proclamation was addressed to the landholders, Chiefs and inhabitants of Oudh, which became—thanks to Lord Ellenborough's impulsiveness—the topic of a fierce Parliamentary fight. It is worth while to consider it with more attention than such quarrels, for the most part, deserve, because it throws light on Lord Canning's general policy in the pacification of Oudh, and on the difficult problems which, in the task of pacification and reconstruction, he was continually called upon to solve.

From the outset of the Mutiny, Lucknow had been a main centre of rebellion; for many months a British force had been besieged there ; for many months it had defied the English rulers of the country. The entire Province had joined in the rebellion. The landowners, with hardly an exception, had turned against the Government, and sent their retainers to aid the besiegers at Lucknow. The peasantry, too ignorant or too feeble to appreciate the efforts of the British officials in their behalf, had followed their Chiefs. Lucknow now lay at the conqueror's mercy; the subjugation of the Province was a mere question of time. It was necessary to announce to the inhabitants the terms on which the Government was ready to accept their return to allegiance. Lord Canning had learnt by experience that Proclamations are not the surest or safest mode of influencing the natives of India. He would have preferred, had it been possible, to communicate the intentions of the Government by instructions issued to officers attached to the columns marching through the country. This being impracticable, a Proclamation was necessary, and the question was as to the terms which would best meet the ends of justice and conduce to the pacification of the Province. The conclusions arrived at by Lord Canning were :—First, that all questions of punishment with death, transportation or imprisonment of rebels, however inveterate and unnecessary their hostility might have been, ought, in the special circumstances of the Oudh population, to be set aside : next,

that the one declared punishment for rebellion should be confiscation of proprietary rights in the soil; such penalty, however, to be enforced with an indulgent hand, and to be remitted on timely submission or other valid ground. The Proclamation, accordingly, announced that, with a few specified exceptions in which loyalty had been maintained, 'the proprietary right in the soil was confiscated to the British Government; who would dispose of such right as might seem fitting.' To landowners, who should make immediate surrender, their lives and honours were secured, provided that 'their hands were unstained with English blood, murderously shed.' For further indulgence 'they must throw themselves upon the justice and mercy of the British Government.' 'To those who come promptly forward,' it was added, 'and support the Government in the restoration of order, the indulgence will be large, and the Governor-General will be ready to view liberally the claims which they may thus acquire to a restitution of their former rights.'

The last provision had been added in deference to the objection urged by Sir James Outram, the Chief Commissioner of Oudh, that the announcement of the Government's intention to confiscate the landowners' rights would drive them to desperate and prolonged resistance, and render it in vain to hope for their services on the side of order.

The Proclamation was unfavourably viewed in Outram's camp, and there were those present who

had the means of making their objections known in high quarters in England. The moment was unfortunate. Lord Palmerston's defeat on the Conspiracy to Murder Bill had just caused a change of Ministry, and a private letter addressed by Lord Canning to Mr. Vernon Smith, President of the Board of Control, explaining the Proclamation and attenuating its apparent severity, had not been transferred by the outgoing official to his successor. Lord Ellenborough, reading the Proclamation as it stood, considered the confiscating clause as excessive and impolitic in its severity. His colleagues fully shared his views. The opportunity for virtuous indignation and denunciatory rhetoric proved too strong for a Minister whose foible was indiscretion. The machinery of the Board enabled its President, by addressing the Indian Government in the 'Secret Committee,' to emancipate himself from the ordinary trammels of extraneous interference. To Lord Ellenborough's stormy genius such a chance was irresistible. Preparing the way by a summary, not too accurate, of the relations of the English Government to Oudh, and of the course of events which had led up to annexation, he thus delivered his assault:—

'We must admit that, under the circumstances, the hostilities, which have been carried on in Oudh, have rather the character of legitimate war than that of rebellion, and that the people of Oudh should rather be regarded with indulgent consideration than made the objects of a penalty exceeding in extent and in

severity almost any which has been recorded in history as inflicted upon a subdued nation.

'Other conquerors, when they have succeeded in overcoming resistance, have excepted a few persons as still deserving of punishment, but have, with a generous policy, extended their clemency to the great body of the people.

'You have acted upon a different principle; you have reserved a few as deserving of special favour, and you have struck, with what they will feel as the severest of punishment, the mass of the inhabitants of the country.

'We cannot but think that the precedents from which you have departed will appear to have been conceived in a spirit of wisdom superior to that which appears in the precedent you have made.

'We desire that you will mitigate in practice the stringent severity of the decree of confiscation you have issued against the landholders of Oudh.

'We desire to see British authority in India rest upon the willing obedience of a contented people. There cannot be contentment when there is general confiscation.

'Government cannot long be maintained by any force in a country where the whole people is rendered hostile by a sense of wrong; and if it were possible so to maintain it, it would not be a consummation to be desired.'

Lord Canning bore the attack with characteristic coolness. He had already, in his correspondence with Outram, indicated the grounds on which the

policy of the Proclamation was to be justified. Making all allowance for the special circumstances of the Oudh landowners, the fact remained that they had shown themselves strenuous and determined rebels. Confiscation of their lands was declared as the general penalty; the means of escaping were shown to be within reach of all without loss of honour. 'Nothing more is required of them than that they should promptly tender their adhesion and help to maintain peace and order.' To concede more than this would have been to treat rebels 'not only as honourable rebels, but as enemies who had won the day;' would have led the people of Oudh to the conclusion that rebellion against the British Government could not be a losing game, and, 'though perhaps productive of an immediate return to order, would not have placed the future peace of the Province on a secure foundation.'

The argument that the rebellion of the Tálukdárs had been provoked by the unjust manner in which the Government had dealt with their estates, was met by the fact that among the most inveterate of our opponents were several Tálukdárs, who had, confessedly, benefitted by the administrative changes introduced in the land system since the annexation of the Province. Nor, on the whole case, was any valid reason shown for departing from the rule that the penalty of confiscation had been incurred, and that relaxation of that sentence could be obtained only by submission.

Lord Canning's reply to Lord Ellenborough's onslaught dealt at the outset with the exceptional circumstances which attended it, and the position in which it placed the Governor-General. Though written in Secret Committee, it had been made public in England three weeks before it reached the Governor-General, and, within a few days of his receipt of it, would be read in every station in Hindustán. The disapproval which it conveyed, publicly endorsed by the Ministry, had been telegraphed to India, and must necessarily increase the difficulties of the Government by weakening the authority of its head, raising delusive hopes, and encouraging resistance. 'No taunts or sarcasms,' Lord Canning continued, 'come from what quarter they may, will turn me from the path which I believe to be that of my public duty. I believe that a change in the head of the Government of India at this time, if it took place under circumstances which indicated a repudiation, on the part of the Government in England, of the policy which has hitherto been pursued towards the rebels of Oudh, would seriously retard the pacification of the country. I believe that that policy has been, from the beginning, merciful without weakness, and indulgent without compromise of the dignity of the Government. I believe that, wherever the authority of the Government has been re-established, it has become manifest to the people in Oudh, as elsewhere, that the indulgence to those who make submission, and who

are free from atrocious crime, will be large. I believe that the issue of the Proclamation, which has been so severely condemned, was thoroughly consistent with that policy, and that it is so viewed by those to whom it is addressed. I believe that policy, if steadily pursued, offers the best and earliest prospect of restoring peace to Oudh upon a stable footing.

'Firm in these convictions, I will not in a time of unexampled difficulty, danger and toil, lay down, of my own act, the high trust which I have the honour to hold; but I will, with the permission of your Honourable Committee, state the grounds upon which these convictions rest, and describe the course of policy which I have pursued in dealing with the rebellion in Oudh. If, when I have done so, it shall be deemed that that policy has been erroneous; or that, not being erroneous, it has been feebly and ineffectually carried out; or that, for any reason, the confidence of those, who are responsible for the administration of Indian affairs in England, should be withheld from me, I make it my respectful but earnest request, through your Honourable Committee, that I may be relieved of the office of Governor-General of India with the least possible delay.'

Lord Canning next proceeded to point out that his assailants' argument threw a grave shade of doubt on the lawfulness of the British annexation of Oudh, and regarded the rebel population rather as engaged in legitimate warfare than as rebels against duly constituted authority. Such a point was, of course,

beyond the competence of a servant of the Government, which had ordered the annexation, either to raise or to discuss. But the fact that a Minister of the Crown could speak hesitatingly of the right of the Government to rule the country was calculated to give a stimulus to the spirit of turbulence, and to unite the various factions of disorder—hitherto without concert or cohesion—in the common cause of national resistance to a foreign oppressor.

Coming to the actual merits of the dispute, Lord Canning next traced the course of British administration in the newly-annexed Province, the oppression, fraud, or chicanery, which infected the majority of the Tálukdár titles, the collapse of the endeavour to reinstate the proprietary occupants of the soil in their supposed rights, the consequent impracticability, on the one hand, of recurring to the *status quo* immediately previous to the Mutiny, and thus renewing an admittedly unsuccessful experiment, or, on the other, of putting a premium on rebellion by re-establishing the Tálukdárs in privileges which, previous to the Mutiny, we had declared to be unjust and inadmissible. The attempt, at such a moment, to adjudicate their rights would have been attended with insurmountable difficulties: nor would 'confiscation' be understood by the landowners as necessarily operating a permanent alienation of their rights, but merely as placing in the hands of Government the means of punishing persistence in rebellion, and, in case of submission, of substituting an undeniable for a doubtful title, and of

attaching to the fiat of restoration such conditions as the new circumstances of the Province might appear to necessitate.

Lord Canning was able to clench his argument by reports, showing that large numbers of Tálukdárs were responding to the Proclamation by tendering their allegiance; that many more, who wished to do so, were deterred by the armed bands still at large in the Province; and that, as soon as this terrorism had been arrested, the acceptance of the terms of the Proclamation throughout the Province might be confidently expected.

The hopes thus expressed were fully realised. No sooner had the bands of mutineers, to which the jungles of Oudh afforded so convenient a refuge, been broken up or driven across the Nepál frontier, than the Tálukdárs came freely forward to tender their submission. Within eighteen months Lord Canning, in giving an account of a Darbár which he had held at Lucknow in October for the Oudh Tálukdárs, was able to declare that the tranquillity of the Province was completely established, and that it was his conviction that in no part of India was opposition to the Government less likely to be encountered. These happy results he attributed chiefly to the introduction of a simple system of administration, suited to the usages of the people, to a light assessment of land revenue, and to the measures whereby the Government had been enabled to confer on the Tálukdárs a permanent and hereditary proprietary title in the

estates which had been restored to them. With few exceptions, the Tálukdárs had, he said, responded to the summons to Lucknow. Many had come, however, in the fear that occasion would be taken to punish their delinquencies. 'They are now,' he said, 'preparing to return to their homes, to all appearance, reassured and gratified.'

In the spring of 1861 still more striking evidence was afforded of the promptness and thoroughness of the pacification of the Province. On the 6th April, 1861, a deputation of nineteen of the principal Oudh Tálukdárs was received in Darbár by the Viceroy at Calcutta. Their address attested in no faltering terms the degree in which the administration of Oudh had conciliated the confidence and goodwill of its landed classes. Making all due allowance for the Oriental hyperbole in which parts of it are conceived, their address conveys a strong sense of the gratitude with which the superior landowners recognised the generous leniency with which they had been treated at the close of the Mutiny and the restoration of privileges so seriously curtailed at annexation. They referred especially to Lord Canning's Darbár of October, 1859. The Viceroy was able to say in reply that there was 'no part of Hindustan more flourishing or more full of promise for the future. The ancient system of land tenure has been restored, but has been placed on a new and clear foundation. The preservation of the great families of the soil has been encouraged and facilitated. The rights of the humbler

occupants have been protected. Garrisons have been reduced, police diminished. The country is so tranquil that an English child might travel from one end of it to the other in safety; so thriving that its people have been the most prompt and liberal of all the natives of India in responding to the cry of their famishing brethren of the North-West.'

Such was the end of the rash and ill-considered attack, which nearly shipwrecked an English Ministry, cost its author his seat in the Cabinet, and might, but for Lord Canning's calmness, have produced a calamitous disturbance in Indian administration at a moment still sorely beset with difficulty and peril. I have dwelt upon it at length because no other incident in Lord Canning's career displays, so far as I am aware, in more striking colours his characteristic qualities of thoroughness in preparation, wisdom in action, and magnanimity under undeserved attack.

afraid,' he said, in defending the general policy of his Bill, 'to trust Parliament with an insight into Indian affairs. Parliament will do fully as well as the Directors.' An amendment, hostile to the proposed measure, moved by Mr. T. Baring, evoked from Sir G. Cornewall Lewis a statesmanlike disquisition on the subject, which put the case for the transfer in its most convincing aspect. The petition against the Bill, he said, was based on two fallacies; one, that it was by the Company that the East Indian Empire had been acquired; another, that the administration of the Company had been extraordinarily good. A very slight historical retrospect sufficed to expose the futility of these assumptions. As for the pretension to administrative excellence, there had never been a worse government than that of the East India Company from 1758 to 1784. Its good character had been earned since Parliamentary control had compelled it to be good. Pitt's contrivance of the Board of Control had secured the much-needed subordination. Dundas had completed it in 1793. The petition fallaciously assumed that the government of India since the battle of Plassey had remained unchanged; but, in truth, there had been continuous change—a continuous absorption by the State of powers which could not safely be wielded by a corporation. The Company's powers, mercantile and administrative, had been constantly curtailed. Their China monopoly went in 1813; their other trade privileges had followed in 1833. On the last oc-

casion, in 1853, a third of the Directors had been made nominees of the Crown. The Mutiny, though not attributable to the existing system, showed how clumsily it worked and what delays it involved. The present arrangements merely threw obscurity on the seat of power. Parliament, by which all improvements had been effected, was becoming daily more conscious of its responsibilities in the matter; and it was expedient that, with the responsibility, should go the outward semblance of authority. Mr. Baring's amendment was negatived; but the Bill had still to encounter some rough weather in the passage through Parliament.

Lord Palmerston's defeat on the Conspiracy to Murder Bill imposed upon his successor the task of elaborating the measure by which the transfer was to be effected and the administrative arrangements which it would involve. Lord Derby's position was embarrassing. The vote on the introduction of the Bill had pledged the House to the principle of the transfer, and the Minister had now to construct a measure embodying that principle and to carry it against a hostile majority. Some of the provisions of the new Bill were, with good reason, criticised as designed rather with a view to Parliamentary support than in the interests of the better government of India. Such, for instance, was the proposal to vest the election of one-half of the eighteen members of Council in five of the great trading centres of England. To Her Majesty's objection to this proposal Lord Ellenborough

replied that commercial interests ought to be adequately represented in the Council, and that any other method securing commercial representation was not likely to find favour with the House of Commons. Lord Ellenborough's view, however, proved to be mistaken, for Mr. Bright and the Liberal party condemned the proposal, and Lord Derby was compelled to admit that the Queen's disapproval was endorsed by the general feeling of the country. The Bill underwent many vicissitudes, and at one time seemed in danger of being shipwrecked in the storm aroused by Lord Ellenborough's indiscreet onslaught on Lord Canning's Proclamation to the Oudh landholders. The House agreed to proceed by the way of Resolutions, and ultimately, on the 2nd August, 1858, the measure became law.

The transfer of the government of India from the Company was rather a formal than a substantial change. The effect was little more than to bring the ostensible machinery of administration into closer accordance with the real facts of the case, and to clear away arrangements which tended to obscure them. India had become far too important a member of the body politic to admit of its being administered by any other authority than a Government in direct touch with and directly amenable to the House of Commons. Parliament must, in the last resort, override every other authority. It was necessary, accordingly, that a Secretary of State, subject, as every other Head of a Department, to Parliamentary

control, should be the ostensible depository of power; and that the Council of India, whatever powers of advice or interpellation it might enjoy, should be shown to be clearly subordinate to him. This was, to so large an extent, the state of the existing relations of the Directors to the President of the Board of Control that the change, though imposing in appearance, was less important than it seemed.

In October Lord Canning received the Proclamation, which announced to the people of India the transfer of the government from the Company to the Queen. By the same mail he learnt that Her Majesty had appointed him her first Viceroy. His letter to the Queen, acknowledging his new dignity, breathed a tone well befitting a great occasion and the serious responsibilities which it entailed. 'It is,' he wrote, 'Lord Canning's earnest hope and prayer that, so long as this high function shall be in his trust, it may be administered in a spirit not unworthy of your Majesty, and that, when he shall deliver it again into your Majesty's hands, it may be found to be without spot or stain from any act or word of his.'

The Royal Proclamation, translated into the many languages and dialects in use throughout the wide territorial confines of the Empire, was read with the proper ceremonial splendour in all the great centres of population and at every civil and military station in India on the 1st November, 1858. The Proclamation possesses an especial interest for Englishmen from the circumstance that its present form is, in some measure,

due to Her Majesty's criticisms on Lord Derby's original draft. The Minister was requested to frame it, 'bearing in mind that it is a female Sovereign who speaks to more than a hundred millions of Eastern people, on assuming the direct government over them, and after a bloody war, giving them pledges, which her future reign is to redeem, and explaining the principles of her government. Such a document should breathe feelings of generosity, benevolence, and religious toleration, and point out the privileges which the Indians will receive in being placed on an equality with the subjects of the British Crown, and the prosperity following in the train of civilisation.'

The Proclamation issued on November 1st was, in all respects, in accordance with these requirements. It announced that Her Majesty had resolved to take upon herself the government of the territories in India heretofore administered in trust for her by the East India Company; and called upon all her subjects in India to bear true allegiance. It constituted Lord Canning first Viceroy and Governor-General; it confirmed all officials of the East India Company in their appointments; guaranteed the scrupulous maintenance of all treaties and engagements made with the Native Princes; promised that the rights, dignity, and honours of Native Princes should be respected by the Queen, and guarded from infringement as jealously as her own.

'We hold ourselves bound to the natives of our Indian territories,' the Proclamation continued, 'by

the same obligations of duty which bind us to all our other subjects: and those obligations, by the blessing of Almighty God, we shall faithfully and conscientiously fulfil. Firmly relying ourselves on the truth of Christianity, and acknowledging with gratitude the solace of religion, we disclaim alike the right and the desire to impose our convictions on any of our subjects. We declare it to be our royal will and pleasure that none be in anywise favoured, none molested or disquieted, by reason of their religious faith or observances; but that all shall alike enjoy the equal and impartial protection of the law; and we do strictly charge and enjoin all those who may be in authority under us, that they abstain from all interference with the religious belief or worship of any of our subjects on pain of our highest displeasure.' 'And it is further our will that, so far as may be, our subjects, of whatever race or creed, be freely and impartially admitted to offices in our service, the duties of which they may be qualified by their education, ability, and integrity, duly to discharge.'

The Proclamation went on to assure the landowners of the Queen's sympathy with their attachment to their ancestral possessions, and her desire that they should be defended in their rights, and, generally, that, in framing and administering the law, due regard should be had to ancient usage and custom. Coming to the question of the rebellion, the Queen announced her desire to show mercy in pardoning

those who had been misled by false reports and ambitious men, and who now desired to return to the path of duty.

The conditional offer of pardon, announced in Lord Canning's Oudh Proclamation, was confirmed. The Proclamation further promised the royal clemency to all offenders except those convicted of having directly taken part in the murder of British subjects. To those who had willingly given asylum to murderers or had acted as leaders or instigators in revolt, their lives only were guaranteed; but, in awarding punishment, a large indulgence was promised in the case of men misled by a too credulous acceptance of false reports. To all others in arms against the Government the Proclamation announced unconditional pardon, amnesty and oblivion of all offences, on return to their homes and peaceful pursuits.

The ensuing 1st January was specified as the date before which compliance with the terms of pardon must be made.

This royal utterance was accompanied by another, emanating from the newly-appointed Viceroy, calling upon all Indian subjects to yield a loyal obedience to the Sovereign. The two Proclamations were recognised throughout India as announcing the conclusion of a struggle which the vast majority of the inhabitants of the country regarded with disapproval, if not with active dislike; which, to large classes, near the scene of action, was a source of serious danger, discomfort and loss; and which, it had now

for months been evident, could end only in the discomfiture and destruction of the insurgents. They had a good effect in placing before the many millions of Indian subjects, instead of the intangible and mysterious abstraction known as 'The Company,' the living personage of a Sovereign interested in their lot, desirous of their welfare, powerful enough to crush opposition, but inspired by sentiments of justice, and prompt to exercise the grand prerogative of mercy—the mother of sons who could come amongst them, one of whom was one day to be their Sovereign; another who could lead their armies; a third whose office reminded them that they were subjects of the greatest naval Power in the world.

The sentiments entertained by the vast masses of India to the dynasties who at various periods have conquered, governed and, frequently, oppressed them, have never, it is reasonable to suppose, been those of enthusiastic affection. If he is left to till his field and eat its produce in peace, the Indian peasant recks little of far-off, vague thrones and authorities, which touch him less nearly than the behaviour of his landlord or the course of the seasons. But the millions of Indians know that they are no longer harried by invading armies, trampled on by lawless magnates, or pillaged by licensed robbers under the guise of officialdom: and they know that for these ineffable exemptions the English Ráj is the safest guarantee.

Many of the Princes and Chieftains of India are, there is reason to believe, bound to the English throne

by ties of sincere respect and even personal attachment; and there is among all a widely diffused belief that their own interests are best served by the security of British rule.

A few days after the issue of the Queen's Proclamation—as though to give a last poetic touch to its completeness, and in a striking form to typify the collapse of rebellion—the last of the Mughal Emperors, having been tried by a British tribunal and convicted of criminal complicity in the crimes of the mutineers, passed, a State prisoner, through Allahábád, on his journey to Burma, where for the rest of his days he was confined.

The Viceroy's anxieties, however, were not yet at an end. Shortly after the issue of the Royal Proclamation a portion of the British force, hitherto in the Company's employ, startled the authorities by a mutinous demonstration of a somewhat serious order. They contended that, having enlisted for service under the East India Company, they could not be transferred, without their own consent, to the service of the Crown, and they demanded either their discharge or fresh bounty money.

At Allahábád, Meerut and other important cantonments, collisions were with difficulty avoided, and the Government was obliged ultimately to grant discharge to all who desired it, a measure which cost the English army the loss of some 10,000 men and produced a dangerous excitement in the native mind, now fortunately too completely cowed to admit

of any bad use being made of a dangerous opportunity.

The suppression of a rebellion is but one portion of the task which it involves on the Government of the country in which it occurs. On his return to Calcutta, early in 1859, Lord Canning found himself confronted with financial difficulties of the gravest order. The Mutiny had involved an enormous deficit in an exchequer in which, even in normal times, it was not always easy to maintain an equilibrium. The measures adopted to restore it created alarm and distrust in the commercial world. A proposal to introduce a system of licensing trades and professions raised a storm of opposition. Lord Canning, convinced of the necessity for extraneous aid, wrote to England to request the services of an experienced English financier, a request which was answered by the deputation, in November, 1859, of Mr. James Wilson to deal with the emergency.

At this time Lord Canning received another valuable reinforcement in Sir Bartle Frere's arrival as a member of his Council. The aid was opportune, for the Government had by no means recovered from the disorganisation consequent upon so violent a shock as the Mutiny had occasioned. There was much uneasiness, much bitterness. Lord Canning had not yet regained the goodwill of his countrymen in Calcutta. The official, the non-official, and the native community were on unfriendly and discordant terms. Sir Bartle Frere soon became Lord Canning's trusted friend and

counsellor, and remained so till his departure in 1862. His wise advice, kindly and genial temperament, and tact in dealing with delicate and difficult questions, contributed in no small degree to the establishment of pleasanter relations of confidence and respect between Lord Canning and the European community.

In the autumn of 1859 the Viceroy proceeded to the Upper Provinces, for the purpose of receiving the Feudatory Chiefs in Darbár, and rewarding those whose loyalty during the rebellion had been conspicuous. At Cawnpur he found awaiting him the huge array of tents which Eastern etiquette prescribes as the proper equipment for the ceremonial progress of the 'Great Lord Sáhib.' Here Lord Clyde, the Commander-in-Chief, had also pitched his camp. Each had his own little world of business and pomp, and the two magnates were followed in their movements by an attendant population of 20,000 souls.

Cawnpur still showed sad traces of the tragedy of which it had been the scene two years before. There had been but little leisure to do proper honour to the victims of that dark tragedy. The site of the well, where lay the bodies of the massacred women and children, was neglected and weed-grown. The ill-fated entrenchment, where the little garrison made its last stand, was close at hand to Lord Canning's camp. The sight brought home to him and his companions the desperate character of the attempted defence. The slender mud parapet, hastily thrown up,

had dwindled nearly to the level of the ground, and, in many places, had wholly disappeared.

From Cawnpur, in October, the Governor-General marched into Oudh, visited the Alambágh—the out-post of Lucknow, where, after the withdrawal of the British garrison, Outram had so gallantly kept guard, and where Havelock's honoured ashes lay—and entering Lucknow in state, cheered the hearts of the assembled Chieftains by proclaiming the inauguration of a policy, under which the privileges and position of great landowners would be more sympathetically recognised than under the late régime. The announcement was received with enthusiasm.

The policy which it embodied has been elsewhere discussed. Not to touch further on a still unexhausted controversy, it may suffice for the present purpose to say that Lord Canning's dealings with the Oudh Tálukdárs, whatever may have been their ultimate consequences to the occupiers of the soil, had, at any rate, the effect—at the moment supremely important—of conciliating the upper classes and of restoring tranquillity to a disordered community with unexpected speed and completeness. There may have been in Lord Canning's appreciative audience many whose rights had been unfairly disregarded, and some who were capable of using their newly-conceded privileges with a wise and merciful consideration of other and subordinate interests in the soil. But experience has shown that the precautions designed by Lord Canning for the protection of those

interests were—like the provisions enacted by the Permanent Settlement in the interest of the Bengal ráyat—seriously inadequate. Subsequent legislation has been undertaken with the view of securing the Oudh peasantry from oppression. But their security is still far from being complete. All that can be said is that Lord Canning took up the matter at a point at which one experiment had signally failed. His own experiment must be pronounced to have been, in its ultimate results to the occupants of the soil [1], a failure; as regarded the grave and pressing necessities of the moment, it was a brilliant success.

Another announcement, made at a Darbár which Lord Canning held a few days later at Cawnpur, was received, with heartier acclamation. The rule against adoption, which had brought several princely families to a close, on the failure of natural heirs, was for the future to be relaxed, and the right of adoption to be recognised by the British Government as affecting sovereignty as well as property. Every reigning family in India breathed more easily for the news that the Government had discarded a policy which doomed many of them, sooner or later, to extinction. Compliments, congratulations, thanksgivings filled the air. It was now evident that the British Government, whose designs against caste and religion had created

[1] Oudh has now only about 15,000 'occupancy tenants,' i.e. tenants with certain privileges as to permanency of tenure and non-enhancement of rent, as against two and a half millions of tenants at will, who are, practically, without any protection.

a panic two years before, intended to use its victory with moderation. The same scene was re-enacted at Agra, where, in grand Darbár, towards the close of November, Sindhia—whose loyalty, despite his mutinous army, was unimpeached—and other faithful adherents, received the generous recognition of their services to the State. 'Never in the history of British rule,' says an eye-witness of these ceremonies, 'had there been more real significance in the signs of public rejoicing—the brilliant cavalcades—the processions of elephants—the streets lined with multitudes, eager, gazing, silent, almost voiceless, and rapt in attention—the house-tops crowded with spectators—the illuminations, with the spray of fountains and the flash of light on the forms of mosques, minarets, temples, marked by luminous lines against the black sky.'

In the midst of all, Lord Canning's fine presence, the marble brow, well-chiselled features, and dignified mien, rendered him to the public eye a fit representative of British rule and of the humane and beneficent policy which it was his ambition to realise.

After visiting Meerut, the indefatigable Viceroy allowed himself one of the rare intervals of relaxation, which are to be discovered in the whole of his Indian career—an excursion along the banks of the Ganges Canal to the famous spot at which the sacred river emerges from the Himálaya, and twin snow-clad summits in the horizon look down on the cradle of two of the mightiest of Indian streams. Lord Canning closed the year at Delhi—scene of so many vicissitudes,

tomb of so many departed dynasties—its famous story now enriched by another episode, stranger than any yet enacted on that well-trodden stage.

Marching across the watershed which separates the waters of the Ganges Valley from those of the Indus system, the Viceroy reached Ambála, received the Cis-Sutlej Chieftains in Darbár, and conferred a well-earned reward on their conspicuous loyalty by announcing that the right of adopting an heir to their rights of sovereignty—not recognised by previous rulers of the Punjab—was henceforth to form part of their prerogative. Towards the close of February 1860, the Viceroy reached Pesháwar, rode into the famous Kháibar Pass, held a Darbár for the wild Chieftains of the Indus frontier, and discussed with the officials certain questions of local policy which could be best decided on the spot. On his return, he took the opportunity for a hurried glance at the far-famed Kángra Valley—one of the loveliest gems of Himálayan scenery—and brought his long and fatiguing journey to a close at Simla on April 10th.

Lord Canning was not, however, destined to enjoy repose. Matters were going badly in Calcutta. The new Finance Minister's projects for restoring the shattered finances of the country had not been favourably viewed. His proposal for an income tax was especially disliked. Sir Charles Trevelyan, the Governor of Madras, had raised the standard of revolt and declared against the impost. The crisis demanded the Viceroy's presence at Calcutta.

Early in May, accordingly, Lord Canning left Simla, and reached Calcutta on the 21st. The task of traversing the great plain of Hindustán in the hottest season of the year is one which no Englishman can accomplish without distress and risk to health. The traveller who, wearied with a six months' official tour and long continuance of public functions, passes from the cool heights of the Himálaya to the blazing plain below, with no relief to be expected but the torrential downpour of the monsoon, lays a tremendous burden on his powers of physical endurance. In Lord Canning's case, the journey was only in too complete accordance with the systematic disregard of every prudential consideration which was undermining his constitution, and which sent him home, two years later, a dying man.

In Calcutta numerous important questions awaited him. The financial trouble was acute. The indigo planters, an important interest by no means inclined to submit to an imagined grievance, had raised a controversy as to their relations to the ráyats, with whom they had to deal and whom they frequently oppressed. The renewal of the measure which imposed the necessity of a licence for carrying arms on Europeans as well as natives gave rise to another storm from the English in Calcutta. Angry meetings assembled in the Town Hall, learned Judges in the Legislative Council gave the weight of their authority against a rule which, considering the events of the two preceding years, Europeans not unnaturally re-

sented. Peace and popularity seemed as remote from the Viceroy as ever. Another question, bristling with difficulties, was that of the rewards to be accorded to officials for their services during the Mutiny—a matter on which strong feelings were certain to be entertained, and any injustice, or supposed injustice, to be bitterly resented. Sir C. Wood's measure for the amalgamation of the European force in India with the Queen's army had now been passed, and the arrangements for carrying it into execution involved a heavy burden on the Indian authorities and especially on the Head of the Government.

In the autumn of 1860 Lord Canning started on another tour in Upper India, received the Bengal Rájás at Patná and Benares, and, crossing into Central India, held a Darbár at Jabalpur for the benefit of Holkar, Sindhia, and other Maráthá magnates.

Returning by Lucknow, where he performed a pleasant task in receiving in Darbár the Baillie-Volunteer Guard, some of the most distinguished heroes of that gallant defence, the Viceroy in February returned to Calcutta, where a host of important questions were awaiting his arrival—military re-organisation, consequent on the recent changes in the Indian army—alterations in the structure of the Legislative Councils, and the creation of High Courts in which the old Supreme Court of Warren Hastings' day, and the Sadr Court, in which Civilian Judges

dealt with native cases, were to be amalgamated in a single tribunal. Each of these important changes involved prolonged consideration, warm controversy and difficult adjustment of conflicting interests and opinions alike in England and India.

CHAPTER IX

Reconstruction

Such a trial as the Mutiny strained every part of the State machinery and detected its weak points. It had brought to light some weak points in the Governor-General's Council, executive and legislative. In 1861 an Act was passed to deal with these defects.

Attention has often been drawn to the cautious and tentative process by which the machinery of Indian Government has been gradually brought into its present form. The history of the Indian Councils is no exception to the rule. Legislation on the subject has been a series of experiments, at first not at all successful. The original object both of the Council and the Supreme Court had been to provide a check upon the Governor-General's power, always tending to become dangerously absolute. An official, who found himself the immediate embodiment of despotic power to many millions of subjects and over vast ranges of territory, and separated by a wide interval of space and time from all superior authority, lapsed, naturally, into the mood which resents and defies extraneous control. Advice from home was

frequently disregarded; orders from home were frequently disobeyed. It was necessary to surround the Governor-General with coadjutors, who would put an effectual curb on personal idiosyncrasy, especially on the idiosyncrasy of disobedience. The Act of 1773 was an attempt to found a system which should render independence on the part of the Governor-General impossible. The Government was to be carried on by the Governor-General and a Council. The Governor-General had a casting-vote, but in other respects had no superior powers to the members of his Council. A combination of three members—such as that which Sir Philip Francis and his two allies effected against Warren Hastings—rendered the Governor-General powerless. Experience soon showed the futility of the hope that the policy of an Empire could be directed by the fluctuating majority of a Board. Warren Hastings made no secret of his disgust at the unworkable system which he was called to administer, and of the difficulties which, owing to it, beset him in his attempt to guide the ship of State through the tempests of that troubled epoch.

In 1784 Mr. Pitt's Act was designed to mitigate the evil by reducing the number of Councillors to three, with the result that, if the Governor-General had but a single supporter in his Council, he would command a majority. Lord Cornwallis was sagacious enough to perceive that, even thus enhanced, the Governor-General's supremacy was precarious and to insist, as a condition of his acceptance of the post, that the

Governor-General should have power to overrule the Council. Subsequent experience showed the necessity of still further change in the same direction. On the renewal of the Company's charter in 1796, the supreme authority of the Governor-General over the whole of India was recognised, and his power to overrule his Council in executive matters unreservedly asserted. In legislative matters he still remained dependent on a majority which the support of a single member of his Council would secure.

The Act of 1833 emphasised the distinction between the executive and legislative functions of the Government, by providing that an additional member should be added to the Executive Council when engaged in legislation. Larger powers were at the same time concentrated in the Governor-General. The legislative functions of the Madras and Bombay Councils were abolished; and even their executive independence was curtailed by the abolition of all powers of independent expenditure.

On the renewal of the Company's Charter in 1853, the Governor-General, who, under the Act of 1833, had been ex-officio Governor of Bengal, was relieved of this duty. It was physically impossible that he should discharge it, and it had, in fact, been very inadequately discharged. Some faint approach to a representative system in the Governor-General's Council was effected by the introduction of members nominated as special representatives of the several Presidencies. The Council—thus enlarged in numbers

and fortified by standing orders suggestive of Parliamentary procedure, the presence of a considerable number of members exercising no other duties but those of legislation, and the practice of holding debates in public—developed an inconvenient tendency to independence. A recognised 'Opposition' assumes that its members are prepared to be responsible for the result of their policy and to enforce it if they get the chance. But in India the opponents of the Government cannot assume its responsibility or even share it. The Government is bound to defend the country, to maintain order, and to provide against national insolvency. No one can relieve it of this obligation. The Governor-General, and the Secretary of State behind him, must, in the last resort, determine how these objects can be best secured. The legislative members of the Governor-General's Council, moreover, could only in a very limited sense be regarded as representative. They were nominees of the Government, chosen on the ground of supposed familiarity with certain local areas and administrative topics. These obvious considerations had sometimes been forgotten. Precautions were now taken against such forgetfulness. The legislative power of the Council was diminished by distributing it among separate legislatures. With this object the powers, of which the Madras and Bombay Governments had been stripped in 1833, were restored to them, and a safety-valve for the local energy of Bengal, the North-Western Provinces, and Oudh was provided by authorising the Government of India

to create local legislatures for them, whenever the occasion demanded.

The Governor-General's Council, as constituted by Act of 1861, and as, in all material particulars, it has since remained, consists of five ordinary members, three of whom must have official experience of India. Of the others, one must be a barrister or a Scotch advocate, and is in charge of legislation; another has charge of finance. The Commander-in-Chief may be, and always is, an extraordinary member of Council. By an Act passed in 1874, the Crown was empowered to increase the number of ordinary members by creating a sixth member, for Public Works, a power which the growing importance of this Department renders highly expedient. For the purpose of legislation the Executive Council of the Governor-General is enlarged by additional members, not less than six nor more than twelve in number. Half of them must be non-official. Among them are invariably some distinguished natives and some of the leading merchants of Calcutta.

The arrangements, instituted by Lord Canning, have borne the test of thirty years' trial with considerable success. The inconveniences, occasioned by the tendency of the Council to become a little Parliament, have been checked. On the other hand, within the limits prescribed by the conditions of the case, much work of the utmost importance has been done; many useful discussions have been held; conflicting views have been boldly advanced

and pertinaciously combatted; intricate questions have been thrashed out; prolonged controversies have been brought to a satisfactory close. The rule which compels members to sit while addressing the Council gives its meetings the informal air of a committee room, and discourages the tendency to rhetorical display. Many native gentlemen of high position and character have taken an active part in the deliberations of the Council, and have materially assisted the Government by their exposition of the native view of the case. Leading merchants have contributed their commercial experience towards the elucidation of business and finance. The Calcutta Bar has sent its leaders to fortify the Council in discussions where their professional knowledge was of especial importance. Much valuable legislation has been achieved. All the main departments of law, civil and criminal, have been embodied in Codes, which now cover the whole area of life except that in which religious or customary rules prevail. These Codes, so far as lucidity, simplicity and precision are concerned, need not fear comparison with any of the systems of the Western World.

Another change of great importance to the despatch of business in the Governor-General's Council was initiated by Lord Canning by means of a power conferred on him by the Indian Council's Act. Comment has often been made on the accumulated arrears which characterised this period of the Indian Government. There may have been qualities in the Viceroy's

temperament which conduced to such accumulations. But in no case would it have been practicable, as the official machine was then worked, for public business to be despatched with adequate promptness. Sir John Strachey, the greatest living authority on topics of Indian administration, has given an interesting account of the causes which rendered such delays inevitable and necessitated a change of procedure. From the first institution of Indian Councils the idea had always been that public business was transacted by the Governor-General and his whole Council, and that, consequently, every detail, however insignificant, was to come before every member. Disputed questions were decided in accordance with the votes of the majority, the Governor-General having a casting-vote. This mode of conducting public business was commended by no less competent an observer than Mr. J. S. Mill as 'one of the most successful instances of the adaptation of means to an end which political history, not hitherto prolific in works of skill and contrivance, has yet to show;' and its probable destruction was deplored as one of the disastrous consequences of a change by which Indian institutions had been 'placed at the mercy of public ignorance and the presumptuous vanity of public men.' The system has perished, Sir John Strachey explains, not from the causes anticipated by Mr. Mill, but for the excellent reason that it was unworkable. 'A more cumbrous and, I might say, a more impossible system of administration for a great Empire could

hardly have been invented.' Events often necessitated the presence of the Governor-General in other parts of India. The senior member then became President, and carried on the Government, the rule being that all matters of importance should be referred to the Governor-General. Thus, to use Sir H. Maine's language, 'the absence of the Governor-General from the Council dislocated the whole machinery of the Government.' Every important question had to journey backwards and forwards between the Governor-General and his Council before its settlement could be achieved. Thus it resulted 'a great deal of work was done twice over, and a great deal was never done at all.'

Such a system worked well enough in early days, when the business of the Governor-General's Council was comparatively small and unimportant; but the developments of Lord Dalhousie's reign and the increased magnitude, intricacy and importance of the current business of the Council rendered its continuance impossible. The legislation of 1861 provided an easy remedy. The Indian Councils' Act enabled the Governor-General to make rules for the more convenient transaction of business in his Council and gave validity to all acts done in accordance with such rules. Exercising this power, Lord Canning distributed the work among the various members, and placed each in charge of a separate department in the administration. The Council was thus virtually 'converted into a Cabinet, of which the Governor-General was the head.' The Foreign Office, i.e. the

branch of the administration which regulates the relation of the Government with Native States and other countries, is generally retained in the Governor-General's own hands; but the Home Department, the Departments of Revenue and Agriculture, Finance and Commerce, Military, Public Works, and Legislation are now each the especial domain of the individual member in charge, and he is primarily, and to a large extent solely, responsible for the despatch of business which arises therein. In each case the Secretary places it, ready for disposal, before the member in charge. If it is unimportant, the member passes final orders; in more serious matters he submits his orders to the Viceroy for approval. If the Governor-General concurs with the member in charge, and thinks further discussion unnecessary, his orders are final. If he disagrees with the member in charge, or on other grounds thinks that the case should come before the Council, he passes orders to that effect. The Council remains technically responsible for all acts of every member; but the real burden of all, except that of his own department, is removed; the intolerable delay of joint consultation is avoided in all but cases of importance, and the power of the Council for controlling the huge machine of administration is enormously increased. As matters now stand, it is not too much to say that, but for this arrangement, the Executive Council, whatever might be the powers of despatch of individual members, could not keep abreast of its business for a week.

A still more important work of reconstruction was effected in the army. The experience of the Mutiny had left no doubt as to the necessity of fundamental change. The European force of 45,000 men, as Lord Dalhousie had left it, had been proved to be disastrously insufficient. The numbers of the native army were in a still more striking degree excessive. It was now resolved that the proportion of native to European troops should, for the future, not exceed two to one, and that the field and other Artillery should be exclusively manned by Europeans. The numerical effect of the arrangements thus carried through was to garrison India with an European force of about 70,000 European and 135,000 native troops. The number of the Europeans was reduced in later years to 62,000: but in 1885 political considerations, arising out of the proximity of Russia to our north-west frontier, led to an increase of the European force by 11,000, of the native force by 19,000 men; and in 1887 the Indian army consisted of 230,000 men of all arms, of whom 73,000 were British.

The question of numbers was comparatively simple. Grave differences of opinion arose as to the future organisation of the force. There was an old-standing controversy, dating from the days of Pitt, as to the policy of maintaining a local European force. That force had grown speedily in the early times of the Company, and within a few years of Plassey had numbered more than 11,000 men. Pitt had appreciated the inconvenience and danger of an army independent

of the Home Government. He had insisted in 1784 on a reduction of the Company's troops; and, a few years later, when circumstances rendered it necessary to increase the English garrison, he had resisted the Company's demand that the addition should be made to the local force in its employ, basing his resistance on the ground that consolidation of the two armies was expedient, and 'sooner or later, must be attempted.' The maximum of the local force was then fixed at 12,000 men. The necessities of the Crimean War had led to this maximum being raised to 20,000; and when the Mutiny broke out, about a third of the European army in India consisted of local troops.

The question now arose as to the proportion of the increased European force to be assigned to the local army. Strong professional jealousies at once blazed out. The Company's servants, civil and military, watched with alarm an impending curtailment of their traditional privileges. The Indian Government, still smarting from the effects of a system which subordinated the defence of India to the necessities of English politics, backed up its officials in demanding a substantial increase of the local army. Lord Canning urged that at least a moiety of the European army should consist of local troops. The Military Committee of the Indian Council made a still bolder claim, namely, that of the whole European force, all the Artillery, three-fourths of the Cavalry, and two-thirds of the Infantry should belong to the local army. These proposals were little likely to find ac-

ceptance with the authorities in England. The Queen and Prince Consort had previously expressed a strong opinion on the desirability of amalgamation. At that time Lord Derby had been opposed to the change, and Lord Palmerston had acquiesced in Lord Derby's view. The insubordinate behaviour of a portion of the European force at the close of the Mutiny helped to strengthen the case for amalgamation. 'I think that it is necessary,' Sir W. Mansfield (Lord Sandhurst) had written in 1859, 'not only for our future safety in India, but as an example to Her Majesty's army, which cannot but be affected by the dangerous example before it, that the local European army should cease to exist.' He supported his view by a grave picture of the lengths to which the European Mutiny had gone. In May, 1860, the Cabinet determined on amalgamation, and in August the House of Commons gave legislative sanction to the change by enacting that Europeans should not for the future be recruited for local purposes in India. The creation of Staff Corps for each of the Presidencies for the supply of officers for native regiments, and for staff employment, as well as for numerous civil duties—judicial and executive—supplemented the organic changes involved in the amalgamation of the two armies, and provided effectually against the grave inconveniences which had been experienced under the previous régime.

CHAPTER X

FINANCE

THE Mutiny marks the inauguration of a new era in Indian finance. When order was sufficiently restored to allow the question of public revenue and expenditure to be considered, the position was recognised as extremely grave. Each of the Mutiny years had ended in an enormous deficit. So far all parties agreed. As to the means of rehabilitation there was less unanimity. The first efforts of the Government to retrieve the position of its exchequer provoked such strong conflicts of opinion that, on his return to Calcutta in 1859, Lord Canning considered it desirable to obtain the assistance of an English financier whose experience and prestige would inspire confidence and overrule opposition. The appointment of Mr. James Wilson fulfilled these conditions. His experience as Secretary to the Board of Control, as Financial Secretary to the Treasury, and, at the time of his Indian appointment, as Vice-President of the Board of Trade, invested his opinion with all the desired authority. He arrived at Calcutta in November, 1859, made a tour of inspection through Upper India, and in his Budget speech, February 1860, he re-

viewed the situation. The picture was sufficiently gloomy. The three years of the Mutiny had involved an aggregate deficit of more than thirty millions sterling, to which it was estimated that the current year would add another six and a half millions. The national debt had grown from fifty-nine and a half to nearly ninety-eight millions, and the burden on the taxpayer was thus enhanced by an addition of two millions to the annual charge for interest. These figures were the more alarming because a longer retrospect showed that the normal condition of the Indian Exchequer was one of constantly recurring deficit. Of the fifty-nine years of the century, forty-four had ended in indebtedness. Every period of war, from Lord Wellesley's splendid campaigns down to Lord Dalhousie's latest conquests, had involved formidable accretions to the debt. It was only, in fact, in the intervals of tranquillity, too rarely accorded to a military Empire, that the Government could pay its way. Its expenditure had now for four years exceeded its income by an average of nine millions per annum. The main remedial expedient—hastily adopted in 1859—a great enhancement of custom duties—though it had added largely to the revenue, was beginning to work its own defeat in decreasing imports, and convinced the Finance Minister that a fundamental readjustment of the tariff was essential.

Mr. Wilson proposed to meet the emergency by the imposition of three taxes:—a license tax of one, four,

and ten rupees on various trades and professions; an income-tax on all incomes above £20 per annum; and a tax on native-grown tobacco, corresponding, as nearly as might be, with the existing customs duty on the imported article. A portion only of this programme was ever carried into execution; but Mr. Wilson's Budget is, none the less, memorable in the chronicles of Indian administration as having enunciated principles which have since been accepted canons of financial policy. The abolition of export duties on Indian products, such as tea, hemp and jute, gave an enormous impulse to local industries; while the reduction of import duties, even in a moment of emergency, was an emphatic recognition of the essential unsoundness of a prohibitive tariff and of the evils thereby entailed upon a country's commerce. A great manufacturing system has, since the Mutiny, grown up in India in the bracing atmosphere of free trade; while twenty millions' worth of Manchester cloths and yarns find their way annually to the homes of the Indian population.

Another point of importance, as to which Mr. Wilson's Budget sounded no uncertain note, was the claim, put forward in influential official quarters, for the exemption of Madras and Bombay Presidencies from the additional taxation necessitated by the Mutiny, on the ground that their armies had not shared in the insurrection. Mr. Wilson treated this narrow and unstatesmanlike pretension with the contempt which it deserved. The Indian Empire must, he pointed

out, be looked at as a whole. Such expenses as that of suppressing the Mutiny were essentially imperial, and the attempt to localise them could only be justified on the ground of a narrow and baneful provincialism. 'We are one great dependency under one Sovereign, and we have one clear duty before us—to unite with all our efforts and all our means in maintaining her Empire prosperous and inviolate.'

Another point which Mr. Wilson's Budget raised and decided was the liability of the Bengal landholders, under the Permanent Settlement, to the general taxation of the country. The concession to them by the State of the right to hold their lands at settled rates has sometimes been put forward as justifying a claim to exemption from other burdens common to the entire community. The Finance Minister now distinctly declared this contention to be unsustainable. He showed, from Lord Cornwallis' Minutes, that no such exemption was contemplated by the framers of the Permanent Settlement; and he pointed out how unsound and dangerous a policy it would be to relieve the richest and most privileged class in India from its lawful share in the national expenditure, and how essential it was, in the general interest of the country, to adhere strictly to the rule laid down by Lord Cornwallis himself, that 'all who enjoy the protection of the State must pay for it in accordance with their means.'

In matters of structural reform Mr. Wilson principally insisted on the creation of efficient machinery

for controlling, and so diminishing, military outlay. No means for any such control at present existed. The uncertainty which beset the present, future, and even past expenditure in this department was proof enough of the necessity of a change of system. Occasional efforts at retrenchment—such as the appointment of Financial Commissions—might palliate, but could not cure, the chronic evil of inefficient supervision. Lord Ellenborough, in 1842, had touched the weak spot of Indian finance when he complained that there was 'no one officer charged with the duty of viewing the expenditure of the country as a whole, and of considering every item of charge, not by itself only, but with reference to the total charge upon the revenue.' But the reforms instituted in compliance with Lord Ellenborough's suggestion had been inadequate. There was no sufficient concentration of authority and duty in the same hands. The desideratum was to regulate every branch of the public expenditure, civil and military, by a system of exact estimates, formally submitted for sanction to an authority competent to revise them with reference to the necessity of the case and the resources of the exchequer.

Among the more cheerful incidents of Mr. Wilson's Budget was his hearty tribute to the strict and accurate justice which had characterised Lord Canning's War administration. 'The future historian of India,' he said, 'when recording the occurrences of the last three years, if he be a man of fine discrimination, will dwell with pride upon the fact that at that

moment India was governed by a nobleman who never, in the midst of the greatest peril, allowed his judgment to be swayed by passion, or his fine sense of honour and justice to be tarnished by even a passing feeling of revenge. For perhaps the first time in any Asiatic war, Lord Canning adopted, throughout the whole of this campaign, the most scrupulous principle of integrity. Whatever service was performed, whatever provisions were supplied, were strictly paid for, and when, under the vigorous administration of the Punjab, contributions were exacted, the obligations have all been acknowledged and faithfully repaid. However much such a mode of conducting a campaign may add to its present expense, the statesman who pursues it is far more than repaid in the permanent stability which he thus gives to an Empire. I cannot but believe that we are already reaping the benefits of it in the great repose which has spread itself over India, and which, I am convinced, will enable us to deal the more effectually with our present financial difficulties.'

When, in the spring of the following year, another Finance Minister, Mr. Laing, introduced his Budget, his account of the situation was scarcely less gloomy than that given by his predecessor. The deficit of 1860 had been more than six millions, five of which had been met only by the dangerous expedient of reducing the cash-balance. The profit to the State from the newly-proposed taxes had, there was reason to fear, been over-estimated. The difficulty of facing

an excess expenditure of five and a half millions was enhanced by the consideration that twenty millions were urgently needed for the construction of a railway system, which all parties agreed to be a first essential to the future prosperity of the country. The expedient of military economies might have seemed to be exhausted, for the reduction had been enormous. The cost of the army in India and England, which in the year before the Mutiny, had been about thirteen and a half millions, had risen in 1858 to nearly twenty-five millions. In 1859 this enormous total had been reduced by four and a quarter, and in 1860 by two and a half millions.

Mr. Laing then approached the year 1861 with a dangerously reduced cash-balance, with expenditure five and a half millions in excess of income, and with new taxes producing only one and a half millions, while twenty millions were urgently needed for railway construction.

The great reduction was to be in army expenditure. Much had already been done; but, despite the stringent measures of the two preceding years, room might still, the Finance Minister considered, be found for retrenchments which the financial position showed to be indispensable. It was essential to curtail expenditure by another three and a half millions. The ultimate effect on the numerical strength of the army was as follows. Just before the outbreak of the Mutiny in May, 1857, the army consisted of 45,000 Europeans and 260,000 natives, in all 311,000 men.

Subsequently to the Mutiny the number of Infantry regiments in Bengal was reduced from a hundred and forty-six, as it had been in 1857, to seventy-two; the Bombay and Madras armies underwent similar reductions. Altogether seventy-seven native regiments had been reduced since 1859. At the same time the number of men in each regiment was reduced to an uniform standard of 600 privates. 50,000 military police were disbanded. The effect of these changes was to reduce the number of the native army from 284,000 to about 140,000 men, a reduction, inclusive of the 50,000 police, not far short of 200,000 men. The numerical reductions of 1861, with corresponding retrenchments in commissariat, ordnance, and other establishments, resulted in a saving of about three millions and a quarter. Another half-million was retrenched from civil expenditure. The year's revenue, by increase in salt duties and natural development, was estimated to show an increase of two millions.

Another half-million was provided by an arrangement, which has subsequently developed into the most important characteristic of the modern financial system, its decentralisation. It took its rise in Mr. Laing's proposal to confide to the local governments certain items of taxation—in the present instance tobacco—leaving them to make the best use they could of its proceeds for local purposes, instead of the assignment which they would, had the financial position allowed, have received from the Imperial

Budget. The advantage of entrusting the local governments with large departments alike of revenue and expenditure, and so giving them an interest in their economical administration, has been so triumphantly established by subsequent experience that the originators of the system have not, perhaps, received all the honour they deserve for their courage in venturing upon so bold a departure from the existing system. The area both of revenue and expenditure, which is now subject to provincial control, has increased from a few hundred thousands of pounds to many millions, and it tends continually to increase with the growth of confidence in the system which its successful working has engendered.

The result of these heroic remedies was that Mr. Laing found himself in the enjoyment of a surplus, which he proposed to employ partly in more liberal grants to public works and to education, partly in still further lowering the duties levied on Manchester goods, and partly in the release of the lower class of contributors to the income-tax—those whose incomes ranged between £20 and £50 per annum from liability to that impost. This exemption affected some 500,000 or 600,000 contributors, and the Finance Minister was able to point with satisfaction to the circumstance that, while Lord Canning had closed his administration with the exemption of five millions of tax-payers from liability to license tax, his successor was inaugurating his with a corresponding concession to the largest and neediest classes upon whose incomes it

had seemed necessary, in a moment of embarrassment, for the State to lay its hand.

The most interesting portion of Mr. Laing's statement, however, was that in which he dealt with the general character of the Indian revenue. His views, he admitted, had been greatly modified by a longer acquaintance with the subject:—'It is only by degrees, and as the result of close enquiry, that the conviction has forced itself on my mind that the revenue of India is really buoyant and elastic in an extraordinary degree.' In support of this view he pointed out that the national revenues had increased by eleven millions in five years, and that, though half of this increase was due to fresh taxation, acquisition of new territory and other exceptional causes, it was not possible to put the normal growth of Indian revenue for the previous ten years at less than £700,000 per annum—an increment which it was reasonable to suppose would have been greater but for the large amount of additional taxation meanwhile imposed. 'I know of no other country,' the Finance Minister observed, 'of which it can be said that her revenue is increasing by £750,000 per annum, while her expenditure has been reduced in one year by four millions; and that she is maintaining an equilibrium, while expending out of revenue four millions a year on public works and another million for interest on unfinished railways.'

The financial strength which Mr. Laing was the first to announce, perhaps to discover, is now a matter of notoriety to everyone with the slightest familiarity

with Indian administrative topics. The cheerful view of the prospects of Indian finance, thus expressed by one of the earliest of Indian Finance Ministers, is deserving of attention, because the embarrassments of its Exchequer, the unsoundness of its financial policy, and its probable or impending insolvency have been favourite topics with ignorant critics of the Government of India. The truth is that in no department can Indian administrators show a bolder front to their assailants. The larger portion of the National Debt is now understood to be represented by great engineering projects, which have already enormously enriched the country, and which, when fully developed, will be the grandest national possession in the world. Despite the disturbances arising from the fall in Exchange, the automatic growth of Indian revenue —the outcome of growing wealth and property— cannot be put at less than a million sterling per annum; and, on the whole, the general position of Indian finance is infinitely stronger than it was when Mr. Laing reviewed it.

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CHAPTER XI

Last Days

India was now at peace. The year 1861, so rich in troubles in the Western Hemisphere, was a tranquil one in the East. The Mutiny was in its last spasms. Ráo Sáhib, the nephew of the Náná, was making desperate efforts to keep alive the embers of Rebellion, but it was practically extinct. The year, however, brought its own anxieties. The monsoon rains in Bengal were of unprecedented violence. The Ganges, Narbadá, and Godávari, and their mighty affluents, swelled into raging seas, burst their banks, and carried devastation far and wide. Great tracts were flooded; crops were ruined; roads and bridges carried away: the homes—the livelihood of millions of cultivators disappeared. To this calamity succeeded an outbreak of cholera, which raged with especial violence in the Upper Provinces of Bengal and in the Punjab. Calamities of this order throw a great additional load of labour and anxiety on the head of the Government. Lord Canning remained, hard at work, till the close of October, when he started on another tour to the North. The most interesting incident of the tour was a Darbár held at Lucknow with the benevolent

object of devising a check on the crime of infanticide, a crime, at the time, rife among the Rájputs of Oudh. More than 200 of the Oudh nobility attended it, and Lord Canning addressed them in the impressive language of which he was so perfect a master. The Tálukdárs readily agreed to the remedial measures which he proposed, and Lord Canning completed this, his last Indian tour, with the cheering hope that an effectual blow had been struck at an inhuman custom.

On the 10th November the Viceroy reached Calcutta, where a domestic catastrophe awaited him. Lady Canning had been visiting Dárjíling, the lovely Hill capital of Bengal, during her husband's hurried journey to the North. She was to meet him on his return. Her journey southwards lay through a malarious tract of country, rendered more than usually unhealthy by the excessive rainfall of the year. Lady Canning was attacked by fever. On her arrival in Calcutta, she was found to be seriously ill. The disease rapidly assumed an alarming aspect, and in a few days it was apparent that her vital energies were fatally impaired. She rapidly sank and expired in the early morning of November 18th. The death of this accomplished and gracious lady affected all classes profoundly. The bitterness of its sorrow to the Viceroy was enhanced by its occurrence at a moment when the task of an Indian Viceroyalty was so nearly accomplished, and when husband and wife alike were counting the hours till the day which would set them once more free to enjoy the pleasures of home life in England.

The calamity broke through his accustomed stoicism. 'When, in obedience to his orders,' writes his Private Secretary, 'I went into the death-chamber, the proud, reserved man could not restrain his tears, and wrung my hand with a grip that showed how great his emotion was.' Lady Canning's funeral took place at Barrackpur, the Governor-General's country seat on the banks of the Húglí, where the skill of engineers and gardeners has carved an Eastern landscape into agreeable resemblance to an English park. Here at a lovely bend of the river—Lady Canning's favourite haunt—her body rests. 'Honours and praises,' so runs the epitaph, which her husband's hand inscribed, 'written on a tomb are, at best, a vain glory:' vain, too, the regrets of saddened hearts, which mourned far and wide in India the loss of the beautiful and gifted woman, who had with such fortitude and devotion shared the anxieties and lightened the labours of Lord Canning's troubled reign. Her serene courage in hours of danger and anxiety, when the hearts of many around her were failing them for fear—her readiness to help in all beneficent projects—her sympathy with all human suffering—her nobility of character, shining bright above catastrophe and vicissitude, made her death a public loss—a common sorrow—and make her memory now one that Englishmen treasure among the precious relics of their country's past.

Lord Canning's work was nearly done. His successor was to arrive in March. All the great topics were disposed of; but he was still busy with arrange-

ments as to Burma and the territory now known as the Central Provinces, each of which had acquired sufficient importance to be placed under an administration of its own. Public opinion in Calcutta had lost its bitterness; the English community were learning to take a juster and more rational view of the ruler, whom, in the hour of excitement, they had so fiercely criticised. The Press honestly admitted the transcendent services which the departing Viceroy had rendered to his country. Farewell addresses breathed a tone of sincere regret. Europeans and natives vied with each other in testifying affection and respect. 'Safe may you return to your native land' —such was the burden of one of these addresses—'the good wishes of all attend you. In that land of the West, if justice and humanity be ever honoured, you cannot but hold a distinguished place.' Little did the framers of these kindly phrases anticipate how vain were their good wishes, or in how few months the object of their too tardy appreciation would be beyond the reach of human praise or blame.

On March 12th Lord Elgin arrived, and a week later Lord Canning took his departure. He was in great depression of spirits—'pale, wan, toil-worn and grief-stricken,' as an onlooker observed. Like Dalhousie he left India a widower; like him, too, though he knew it not, a dying man. Like Dalhousie he had devoted himself with almost fanatical self-devotion to a task too grand, too weighty for human infirmity, the task of ruling India as the highest ideal of government

and strictest dictates of conscience would prescribe. But Dalhousie's labours, great and beneficent as they were, had been performed in the exhilarating atmosphere of success and popularity. Lord Canning had, not less heroically, confronted unexampled difficulties and disasters amidst storms of obloquy. Each played his part nobly. England may well be proud of both.

On Lord Canning's return to England, good hopes were at first entertained of his restoration to health. Alarming symptoms, however, soon developed themselves. The physician who had been his medical attendant in India was summoned, and recognised at once that the end was near at hand. On Lady Clanricarde devolved the painful duty of informing her brother that his days were numbered. Lord Canning received the intelligence with characteristic stoicism: 'What! so soon?' he exclaimed, and forthwith prepared himself for death.

During the few weeks which remained he received farewell visits from Lord Granville, Lord Harris, Lord de Tabley, and others of his kinsmen and friends. On June 17th he died. It was discovered after death that his constitution had been far more completely undermined than there had seemed reason to suppose to be the case, and that toil, anxiety and the tremendous strain on nerve and brain had pronounced his doom while he was still labouring, with no apparent diminution of energy, at the completion of his arduous task.

He was buried in Westminster Abbey, close to the

spot where lie the remains of his father and Lord Stratford de Redcliffe, and where an impressive group of the three Cannings now stands to remind Englishmen of the public services of a gifted and distinguished race. Among the mourners who gathered in that last home of so many of England's choicest sons, two heroes of the Mutiny were to be seen—the rugged and soldier-like Clyde, supporting his friend Outram, now too enfeebled to walk without assistance—worthy mourners, indeed, at such a grave. The three men had stood side by side in the crisis of England's fate: together they had confronted that dark hour of anxiety; together they had planned, laboured, and hoped. They had often differed, as it was likely that such strong natures should. Success had come, and all the honours of success, and now to one of them, the end. For his companions, too, the end was near at hand.

A generation has passed. The grave has closed over many another of the men who, in that crisis of their country's fate, served England loyally and well. In the same sacred precinct, another of the companions of Canning's work—John Lawrence—brave and constant heart—has been laid to his rest. Strathnairn, the brilliant genius of victory—Napier, honoured and beloved, have passed away into the silence. Already the haze of distance has settled on the events of the Mutiny. The din of battle grows faint—the cannon's roar—the crash of the charge—the shouts of victory—the sobs—the groans; faint, too, the clatter of angry tongues—the shrill dispute—the eager blame, the storm

of faction fight which raged so high and shrill. We look at the men, at the events of that time, through a calmer atmosphere and with steadier eyes. We can read their meaning and gauge their worth. We think of them with reverence, with gratitude, with just and patriotic pride. Their names are familiar words to us, and will be, it may be hoped, to generations of Englishmen yet unborn. Their greatness is our own —a precious national possession. Amid much in modern life that is vulgar, ignoble, and commonplace, the achievements of our countrymen in the Mutiny shine out distinct. They were on an heroic scale; nor least heroic the serene and resolute mood, the unshaken nerve, the firm justice, the loftiness of soul, with which Canning, rising nobly to the duties of a foremost post in an eventful epoch, piloted his country's fortunes in that dark hour across that tempest-driven sea.

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